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Masters of Contemporary Music

A SERIES OF BIOGRAPHICAL AND
CRITICAL SKETCHES EDITED
BY CHARLES WILLEBY

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Masters of English Music

BY

CHARLES MILLER

A FELLOW OF THE ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE D'ATHÈNES

WITH PORTRAITS

LONDON
JAMES R. OSGOOD McILVAINE & CO
15 ALBEMARLE STREET
1896

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Masters of English Music

BY

CHARLES WILLEBY
AUTHOR OF "FRÉDÉRIC FRANÇOIS CHOPIN"

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON
JAMES R. OSGOOD, McILVAINE & CO.
45 ALBEMARLE STREET
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PREFACE

The aim of this Series is to place on record the chief facts and incidents in the careers of the greatest living composers, and to sketch the respective tendencies and the distinguishing features of their work. It is intended to devote a volume to the musicians of each country, and, so far as practicable, to obtain all biographical data from the composers themselves. In the present volume this plan has been followed exclusively. The author wishes to acknowledge the assistance afforded him by Messrs. Novello, Chappell, Boosey, and Cramer, in kindly providing him with the full scores, &c., of the various works for purposes of reference.

London,
6th April 1893.

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
ARTHUR SEYMOUR SULLIVAN	1
ALEXANDER CAMPBELL MACKENZIE . . .	103
FREDERIC HYMEN COWEN	173
CHARLES HUBERT HASTINGS PARRY . . .	257
CHARLES VILLIERS STANFORD	281

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

ARTHUR SULLIVAN . . . *Frontispiece*

ARTHUR SULLIVAN (MENDELSSOHN SCHOLAR, 1856) . . . . . *To face p.* 1

ARTHUR SEYMOUR SULLIVAN IN 1864 . ,, 20

FACSIMILE OF AUTOGRAPH SCORE OF "THE MIKADO" . . . . . ,, 58

A. C. MACKENZIE . . . . . ,, 103

A. C. MACKENZIE (KING'S SCHOLAR, 1862) ,, 116

BORGO-ALLA-COLLINA IN CASENTINO . . ,, 136

FREDERIC H. COWEN . . . . . ,, 173

FREDERIC H. COWEN, AGED EIGHT YEARS ,, 176

"CATCH" FOR SIX VOICES, BY F. H. COWEN ,, 202

C. HUBERT H. PARRY . . . . . ,, 257

C. V. STANFORD . . . . . ,, 281

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ARTHUR SULLIVAN
Mendelssohn Scholar, 1856

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ARTHUR SEYMOUR SULLIVAN

Of all the artistic careers in this country during the last fifty years, that of Arthur Sullivan is perhaps the most brilliant. No matter what difference of opinion may exist as to his absolute or comparative greatness, there is complete unanimity as regards the brilliancy of his career. Most regard him as the greatest musician of his country. Whenever occasion requires that we "trot out" our representative English musician, with one accord we point to him. His name is a household word. He is one of the few artists for whom the public has a true affection, quite apart from its admiration.

As the only career parallel to his, that of Adelina Patti has been instanced. The suggestion is not without point. Both are products of the "forties," both have Italian blood in their veins, both have reached the highest pinnacle of success, and both are truly beloved

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by a country which has a reputation for callousness with respect to the providers of its artistic pleasure. Upon no two of her children has fortune smiled more benignly. And we are glad that it is so. I would conjure up no comparison as to their relative merits in their respective spheres, nor would I be understood to hold a brief for the astrologists, though here is an excellent opportunity for them to 'score.' They would I have no doubt assure us that the "horoscopes" were very similar. All value that there is in the comparison is constituted in the mere fact of the comparison itself—the fact that for brilliancy, for a series of glorious triumphs, there is only, in the world of music, one career at all analogous to that of Arthur Sullivan. Curious as all else may be, it remains but coincidence.

The Italian blood which there is in him comes from his mother, who was descended from an old family named Righi, the terminating "i" of which was afterwards Anglicised into "y." His father was an Irishman, and a musician. The special branches of his art which he practised were those of bandmaster at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, and later on professor of the clarionet at Kneller

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Hall. The former position he held from 1845 to 1856; the latter from the commencement of the existence of Kneller Hall as the "Military School of Music," in 1857, till his death. Thomas Sullivan had two sons, Frederic and Arthur. The latter and younger, with whom we are chiefly concerned, was born in London on May 13, 1842. The early influence was of the happiest, for the father was an enthusiast in his art. We can imagine the loving fondness with which he fostered the musical sensibility which the boy showed almost in his infancy. We can picture the joy it was to him to find in his second son what he had perhaps longed to find in his firstborn, a virgin soil wheron he might sow the seeds of sound, with well nigh certainty that they would strike root and yield in plenty. Every childish longing to know more of what he heard around him—for he accompanied his father daily to his band practice—was ministered to with a loving care not only by the father, but by the players themselves. No practice was complete without the little curly-headed fellow, with his rosy face and darkly wondrous eyes, running hither and thither, happier there by far than with all the toys imaginable. And so it went on until he

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reached eight years of age, by which time, incredible as it may sound, there was hardly a wind instrument that he could not play with more or less facility. Even thus early there was no doubt left in Mr. Sullivan's mind that his son would be a musician, and he hoped a distinguished one. But he was in no hurry for him to commence anything approaching a serious training. On the contrary, he decided that it would be best to get the boy away from all sound of music for a time. So he sent him to a private school in Bayswater. Here he remained until he was eleven. But the natural love of music within him was too strong thus to be repressed. He had heard that there was such a thing as a choir school in connection with the Chapel Royal, and nothing would do but that his father should place him there. In vain was all remonstrance, and in the end he had his way. He had an unusually beautiful treble voice, and, quite unaided, had learned to sing those arias which he had heard at home, and which even then he loved. Before he could enter the Chapel Royal it was necessary that his voice should be tried. His master therefore, acting under instructions from his father, took him to Sir George Smart, to whom

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he sang. He in turn sent him to find out the Rev. Thomas Helmore, who was then master at the Chapel Royal, St. James's. It happened that Mr. Helmore had recently removed from the house which he had occupied, and on the arrival of the boy and his master there, was not to be found. To make matters worse, the people in the house were unable to give any information as to his whereabouts. Here was an unlooked-for dilemma, at which the little fellow was quite heartbroken. But he determined not to be beaten, and proceeded from baker to butcher, from butcher to draper, in the vicinity, until at last he was rewarded. Mr. Helmore, they told him, had moved to Cheyne Walk. Off he went, as fast as his little legs could carry him, to Chelsea. Arrived there, he found the master without difficulty; and having found him, he sang to him—sang to him "With verdure clad"—with so pure a voice, so true an instinct, that two days afterwards he received a note to the effect that he might join the school. This was on the Tuesday in Holy Week, 1854. On the following Thursday he had learned and sung the treble part in Nares' anthem, "Blessed is He," and astonished every one. "His voice was very sweet," said Mr. Helmore, "and his

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style of singing far more sympathetic than that of most boys."

It would be impossible to overrate the good fortune which was his in coming at so susceptible an age under the influence of such a man as was Thomas Helmore. Besides being a good scholar and an earnest divine, he was a born schoolmaster as well as a cultured musician. His influence over the boys was of that order which endures, and the effect of which is ever felt by the man in after-life. They lived with him in Cheyne Walk, and with him they walked daily to services at St. James's. He was no bigot. He did not weary them with Scriptural precepts. Rather did he strive to lead them by force of example, by force of circumstances in their daily life, and by instilling into them and fostering that *esprit de corps* which we term 'schoolboy honour,' which is one of the purest forms of honour, and which, if he be worth his salt, is inherent in every boy, and only needs the fostering. There was nothing of the 'prig' in Helmore's boys, yet they were good boys, and would have scorned a dirty trick. Not one of them but remembers the morning, when assembled in class for their usual lesson, they were bade put down their books and listen. The

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news had just arrived of the great battle of the Alma. For lesson he read them W. H. Russell's brilliant account of it, word for word, from the *Times*. It was one of the greatest lessons that they ever had—a lesson of courage, of steadfastness, of humanity that they never forgot. It appealed to every good instinct in their frank boyish natures. It roused the "man" within them, and they realised (more fully than anything else could have made them) that they had a duty to fulfil—a duty to themselves and to each other—in that other battle of life which each would have to fight.

Sullivan was only three years at the Chapel Royal; yet in that short time it was that he acquired much of that solid musical masonry upon which his work has been founded, and which has proved so sure. Here it was that he made his first attempts at musical composition. His first song, "O Israel"—a boyish homage to Mendelssohn, for it breathes "Hear ye Israel" in every bar—was written at this time. This he followed with an anthem, which was duly sung in the Chapel. How proud he felt when Bishop Blomfield, who was then Dean of the Chapel Royal, hearing that it was the work of one of the boys, sent for him, patted him on the

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head, and gave him half a sovereign—the first half-sovereign he had ever earned! At this time he had had but eighteen months' actual musical study; but six months later it was put to a test which showed that, if it had not been lengthy, it had been indeed thorough. This was in 1856.

Some ten years previously a movement had been made among the friends of Mendelssohn in Leipsic to found a scholarship in his memory. As soon as the matter had taken definite shape they appealed to his admirers in England for support. This was readily accorded, and a committee, with Mr. Carl Klingemann (Mendelssohn's intimate friend) as secretary, was formed in London. In order to raise the necessary funds it was decided to take advantage of a generous offer to give her services made by Madame Jenny Lind, and to perform the "Elijah" on a grand scale. This, with the aid of the Sacred Harmonic Society and Mr. Julius Benedict, took place on the 15th December 1848. The result was a sum of some thousand pounds, which was invested and formed the nucleus of what is now our Mendelssohn Scholarship. The original plan, however, of amalgamating the London and Leipsic projects

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fell through, and it was not until 1856 that the scholarship was actually thrown open for competition.

Directly Sullivan saw it announced in the papers he determined to compete for it. Mr. Helmore was quite willing that he should do so, and worked hard with him, determined that he should astonish the examiners, in spite of his age. He did more than this, for when the result of the examination was made public, he found himself elected first Mendelssohn Scholar. From among the many competitors there was only one other to compare with him, and that was Joseph Barnby. To this day he declares that, in the course of the many momentous episodes of his career, he never suffered more keenly the hopes and fears of expectation than when awaiting the judges' decision. And in after-life he remembered this his first step to fame and fortune, and in memory of it increased the value of the scholarship by some £90 a year.

Although he now entered the Academy and enjoyed the benefits of the prize he had gained, he did not leave the Chapel Royal. His voice and talents were too valuable to be spared there until it was absolutely necessary. For two

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years he studied harmony and counterpoint with Goss, and the pianoforte with Sterndale Bennett and O'Leary. Then his voice broke, and the committee decided that it was time for him to go to Leipsic; so in the autumn of 1858 he left. On his way across he was robbed of all his little stock of money, and had it not been for the kindly help of a fellow-traveller there is no knowing in what straits he might have found himself.

Arrived at Leipsic, he entered the Conservatoire. Here he had for masters Hauptmann, Julius Rietz, Moscheles, and Plaidy—the first-named two for composition, and the latter for pianoforte. Of Plaidy he says: "His class was always thronged, and his instruction eagerly sought by pupils from all parts of the world. This popularity arose from his remarkable gift (for it was a gift) of imparting technical power. Were a pupil ever so deficient in execution, under Plaidy's care his faults would disappear, his fingers grow strong, his touch become smooth, singing and equal, and slovenliness be replaced by neatness. Great attention to every detail, unwearying patience, and a genuine enthusiasm for the mechanical part of pianoforte playing were his most striking characteristics."*

* Grove's "Dictionary of Music."

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At Leipsic he worked very hard both at pianoforte playing and composition. The first we hear of his efforts in the latter direction is in connection with his overture, "The Light of the Harem," which received a hearing at the students' concerts. The *Leipziger Journal* of that year has mention of this. It says: "To-day's examination was devoted partly to composition and partly to *ensemble* playing. With regard to the former we rejoiced in discovering in young Sullivan a talent for which, with earnest study, one may confidently predict a bright future. His overture, although somewhat lengthy, aimed with well-chosen means and full consciousness at a definite end. That he frequently consulted Mendelssohn we will not lay to his charge, as it would be looking for impossibilities to expect originality in such first attempts."

At this time Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Schubert were his ideals, and he could not but reflect them in his work. Indeed he has always been strongly influenced by the latter master. The Wagner of "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin" also appealed strongly to him, although he has never been much in sympathy with either "Tristan" or the "Nibelungen."

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His overture was shortly afterwards followed by a string quartet. This work was heard by Spohr in Leipsic; and when the lad was introduced to him, the master could hardly believe that it was he who had written it. "So jung," he exclaimed, "und doch so weit in der Kunst!" (So young, yet so advanced in art!)

This encouragement by so great a musician spurred the young composer on more than ever. He determined to write something which he could show to the Mendelssohn scholarship committee on his return — something which should prove to them that they had made no mistake in their estimate of his powers. The work eventually took the form of incidental music to Shakespeare's "Tempest." It was performed at the annual concert in Leipsic in the early part of '61. In the same year Sullivan returned to London, bringing the score with him.

A few months after his return he added several numbers to the "Tempest" music, and it was produced at the Crystal Palace Concert on April 5, 1862. Its success was immediate and emphatic, and on the following Saturday it was, by general request, repeated. Amongst those who came to hear it on this

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occasion was Charles Dickens. He was waiting outside the artists' room as Sullivan came out, and going up to him and shaking him by the hand, he said, "I don't profess to know anything about music, but I do know that I have listened to a very beautiful work." Shortly after this, Dickens accompanied Sullivan and Chorley to Paris, and there existed between the novelist and the musician one of the firmest of friendships, and one which was only severed by death.

In Paris Sullivan made the acquaintance of Rossini. The Italian master was greatly struck with his talent, and morning after morning would insist upon playing with him the four-handed arrangement of the "Tempest" music. It is not difficult to understand the fascination it had for him. The freedom of its melody, the freshness of its conception, the joyousness of its spirit, the piquancy of the scoring, were one and all calculated to appeal strongly to the composer of 'Il Barbiere.' Moreover, Rossini delighted in having young people around him, and there are not a few musicians and others who well remember many happy days spent with the old maestro at his pretty villa at Passy where he was wont to pass his summer. Sullivan, one of his 'jeunes confrères' as he used to call them,

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enjoyed many delightful hours with him, and to-day treasures a beautiful miniature which the maestro gave him as a parting gift, as one of the most valuable of the many souvenirs which he possesses.

Personally I look upon his intimacy with the Italian composer at this time as having greatly influenced him. At all events he was, immediately after his visit to Paris, consumed with a strong desire to know more of opera and things operatic. Madame Viardot Garcia's impersonation of 'Orfeo,' which he had seen in Paris, had also left a lasting impression upon him. Yet he did not feel quite equal to giving adequate expression to his feelings in music until he knew something of the technique of the stage. To acquire this was a matter of no small difficulty. At last he decided to write to his friend Michael Costa, who was then conductor of the Opera at Covent Garden, and ask that he might be allowed to attend rehearsals there. Costa, however, refused, saying that he could make no exception to his stringent rule that no one should be allowed to attend rehearsal save those who were taking an active part in it. Nevertheless he did not fail to recognise that his young friend only sought it as a means to an end and

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in no spirit of idle curiosity. He therefore proposed a compromise, to the effect that he should undertake the duties of organist to the Opera. He would then, of course, have unlimited access to the theatre, and would acquire the experience he sought. This the young musician gladly accepted, and it proved of greater benefit to him than he had ever thought possible. He had been there but a short time when, at the conductor's request, he wrote a Ballet for the opera. It was entitled "L'ile Enchantée." From it alone he learnt much that was of value to him. The mere fact of having to subordinate his music to the requirements of the inventors, the scene-painters, stage machinists, and *première danseuse*, each of whom had not one but many words to say, was of itself a valuable lesson—the more so as these people were the best of their kind, and the suggestions they made were generally the outcome of knowledge and experience.

It was well that he was even at that time possessed of an almost phenomenal facility of writing, or many of the demands made upon him could not have been complied with. Certainly the things he was called upon to illustrate musically were not lacking in variety.

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For instance he says: "On one occasion I was admiring the 'borders' that Beverley had painted for a woodland scene. 'Yes,' he replied, 'they are very delicate, and if you could support them by something suggestive in the orchestra, we could get a pretty effect.' I at once put into the score some delicate arpeggio work for flutes and clarionets, and Beverley was quite happy. The next day probably some such scene as the following would occur. Mr. Sloman, stage machinist (*loq.*), 'That iron doesn't run in the slot as easily as I should like, Mr. Sullivan—we must have a little more music to carry her (Salvioni) across. I should like something for the 'cellos. Could you do it!' 'Certainly, Mr. Sloman. You have opened a new path of beauty in orchestration,' I replied gravely, and I at once added sixteen bars for the 'cello alone. No sooner was this done than a *variation* (solo-dance) was required, at the last moment, for the second *danseuse* who had just arrived. 'What on earth am I to do?' I said to the stage manager, 'I haven't seen her dance yet, and know nothing of her style.' 'I'll see,' he replied, and took the young lady aside. In five minutes he returned. 'I've arranged it all,' he said. 'This is exactly what she wants

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(giving it to me rhythmically), *Tiddle-iddle-um, tiddle-iddle-um, rum-tirum-tirum*, sixteen bars of that; then *rum-tum rum-tum*, heavy you know, sixteen bars, and then finish up with the overture to "William Tell," last movement, sixteen bars and *coda*.' In ten minutes' time I had composed it and written out a *répétiteur's* part, and it was at once rehearsed."

Costa himself was, we know, a severe martinet. Yet, autocratic, quick to take offence, and implacable as he was, he had a strong feeling of justice and was intensely kindhearted. He liked a strong staff about him and he liked them to be self-reliant. A man of iron nerve himself, he valued highly the possession of that quality in those under him. It happened that an occasion arose in which, had not the young organist exercised the greatest presence of mind, nothing but the entire breakdown of the performance could have resulted. The opera was "Faust," and the house was packed. All went well until the church scene, in the midst of which the wire, connecting the pedal under Costa's foot with the metronome stick at the organ, broke. In the concerted music this meant disaster, for the organist could hear nothing but his own instrument. Quick as thought, whilst he was playing

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the introductory solo, Sullivan called a stage hand. "Go," he said quickly, "and tell Mr. Costa the wire is broken and that he is to *keep his ears open and follow me.*" No sooner had the man flown to deliver his message than the full meaning of his words flashed upon him. True, there had been no time for choice of expression, but what would Costa say to a message thus delivered by a stage hand, which, moreover, would certainly gain nothing of elegance in the telling? The scene, however, went well, but at the end of the act he realised more fully than ever the arrogance (as it seemed to him) of his message, and approached his chief with no little nervousness. He commenced to apologise profusely. Costa, to his great surprise, stopped him at once, and shaking him by the hand said: "No, no. Good boy, you kept your head and did quite right." The great conductor never forgot the service which his young friend had rendered him, in saving him from what (although the result of pure accident) would have been nothing more nor less than a horrible *fiasco.*

At this period he lost a lot of time writing an opera entitled "The Sapphire Necklace," the libretto of which, by Mr. Chorley, proved quite

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unsuitable for stage representation. The overture is all that now exists of it, the remainder of the music having been utilised in other works. Then came his cantata "Kenilworth." Here he suffered again at the hands of his librettist. It was produced at the Birmingham Festival (1864), and in spite of the patched-up libretto, the music did not fail to meet with recognition. Even now the interpolated scene from the "Merchant of Venice," "How sweet the moonlight sleeps," keeps its place in the concert-room.

From this same time also dates his first success as a song-writer. "Orpheus with his lute"—which is one of his best songs—was now written and sold for a five-pound note. It has since been the source of an income of some hundreds yearly to its publishers.

It must not be forgotten that, great as his artistic success had been, it had not been the means of bringing him in any considerable sum of money. He generally had a sufficiency for his needs, but by no means a superfluity. And although he was then, and has always been, possessed of a strong spirit of true Bohemianism (for two of its constituent elements, the love of travel and the love of conversation, are his greatest loves), he was none the less for that

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desirous of worldly independence. Teaching as a means of livelihood he set his face against from the first. Yet composition in its more serious forms could not then be said to pay. He recognised full well that the duty of the man blessed with true genius in any art was to give free exercise to that genius; yet, on the other hand, he did not lose sight of the fact that the real purpose of a profession, be it that of music, literature, art or medicine, is to turn knowledge and talents to pecuniary profit. This he felt he must do in some way. A famous editor of the *Quarterly Review* once observed that "a single hour of composition won from the business of the day is worth more than the whole day's toil of him who works at the trade of literature; in the one case the spirit comes joyfully to refresh itself, like a hart to the water-brooks; in the other, it pursues its miserable way panting and jaded, with the dogs of hunger and necessity behind." Now this is equally true of music, and lacks no amount of illustrative example. There is, with most artists, a very broad and distinctive line separating their professional from their truly inspirational work. But with Sullivan this is not markedly so. He, as I have said, recognised full well that if he persisted in his determination to

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ARTHUR SEYMOUR SULLIVAN IN 1864

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avoid the drudgery of teaching it would be necessary to replace it by some other professional activity as a means of money-making, and he determined to rely almost entirely upon composition in one form or the other. His songs, even though in some primary instances he had disposed of them for a trifle, would as time went on become a source of handsome profit to him. This he could not fail to see. He resolved therefore to devote himself in no small degree to the production of the lighter and smaller forms of his art. They, together with the performance of his duties as organist of the church (St. Michael's, Chester Square, to which he had been appointed shortly after his return from Leipsic, and which post he held till 1867), should form the basis of his truly "professional" work. For a composer, the purely intellectual with no accompanying element of the professional must assuredly be the ideal life. But it was beyond his reach for the present at all events. All this he recognised and decided in his own mind. But now we come to what is really extraordinary. Having thus determined he sits down one evening, let us say, to write a song—in the exercise of his profession purely, just as a doctor would write a prescription for a patient. One might even go

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so far as to say that he is avowedly about to compose what is very expressively described as a "pot-boiler." Well, in a short time it is finished. What do we find? Invariably that it bears in every bar the stamp of true genius, of facile inspiration, that it smells not of the lamp at all—in a word, that it is ever beautiful, never laboured.

It is from among these very "pot-boilers," if you will, that we find some of the loveliest of his youthful inspirations. Take for instance, "I heard the nightingale," "Orpheus with his lute," "O Mistress mine," "Sweet day so cool," "The moon in silent brightness," "O fair dove, O fond dove"—each and every one has beauty, many reveal real genius, all are geniality itself. This great faculty of being able at any moment to call upon his creative genius, be it on behalf of song or symphony, with well nigh certainty of response, is one of the most highly characteristic features of Sullivan as a musician. It has rarely failed him.

A visit to Ireland about this time produced no less a work than his Symphony in E. It assuredly is tinged with his Irish impressions, and had its composer so wished it, could well have carried the title of "Irish Symphony."

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Unfortunately it is, up to the present time, his only contribution to the great form of musical art, but it is one of the most perfect of all his orchestral compositions.

The following year of 1866 was an eventful one for him both as a musician and a man. It saw the creation of two works, each of which, though differing widely from the other, was in its way highly typical of him. At an evening party at a friend's house he had seen Du Maurier and Harold Power play Offenbach's farce, "Les Deux Aveugles." It struck him that a similar extravaganza in English would be no less happy. On his way home from that party he mentioned his thought to Mr. Burnand. The latter was equally struck with it, and proposed an adaptation of J. Maddison Morton's farce of "Box and Cox." This he lost no time in preparing, and shortly afterwards handed it completed to the composer, under the inverted title of "Cox and Box." Sullivan set to work on the music, and it was performed several times in private, but—as is his wont to this day—he wrote out no accompaniment, preferring, when required, to extemporise one himself. Some time afterwards it was arranged to perform the work at the Adelphi Theatre for the benefit

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of a fund organised by the staff of *Punch* on behalf of their late colleague, C. Bennett, with the following caste:

Box . . .	M. G. Du Maurier.
Cox . . .	Mr. Harold Power.
Sergeant Bouncer	Mr. Arthur Blunt.*

Full Orchestra conducted by the Composer.

He deferred writing the accompaniment from week to week, from day to day, until the very last week had arrived, and the performance was announced for the following Saturday afternoon. Up to the previous Monday evening not a note for the orchestra was written. On that night he commenced to score, and finished two numbers before going to bed. On the Thursday evening two more had been completed and sent to the copyist, so that on Friday evening, at eight o'clock, when he again sat down to work, there were still five longish numbers to be scored, and the parts to be copied. Then began the tug of war. Two copyists were sent for, and as fast as a sheet of score was completed by the composer, the copyists in another room copied

* This gentleman had not then joined the dramatic profession in which he afterwards made such a brilliant reputation as Mr. Arthur Cecil.

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the parts. Throughout the night they kept it up, until at somewhere about seven in the morning Sullivan, on going into the other room, found them both fast asleep. He was in despair. A moment's thought, however, decided him. One thing was certain—there was no time to score. There was then but one alternative—to orchestrate the remaining numbers *in parts*. This he did, and at 11 A.M. all was finished, and at twelve the piece was rehearsed. What the achievement of a feat of this kind means—the strain on the memory and the application required—only a musician can fully realise. But in this respect he is, at all events in England, unique. For rapidity of work he may have been equalled in the history of music, but I do not think he has been surpassed. "Contrabandista" which followed "Cox and Box" was composed, scored, and rehearsed within sixteen days from the time he received the MS. libretto. The overture to "Iolanthe" was commenced at 9 P.M. and finished at seven the next morning. That to the "Yeomen of the Guard" was composed and scored in twelve hours, while the magnificent epilogue to the "Golden Legend," which for dignity, breadth, and power stands out from amongst any of his choral examples,

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was composed and scored within twenty-four hours. To merely write the number of notes in such a composition as this would be a feat to most men, but when all is perfection, as it is here, it is nothing short of prodigious.

In this same year he had accepted an invitation to write a work for the Norwich Festival. As the time approached for its completion, he worked and worked, but without any result satisfactory to himself. About a month before the Festival, in sheer despair at his inability to satisfy himself, he said to his father (to whom he was passionately attached), "I shall give up the Norwich work; I can't get an idea of any kind. I suppose that the fact of sitting down in cold blood to write an abstract work by a certain date with nothing suggestive to work upon, paralyses me." "No, my boy," said his father. "You mustn't give it up, you will succeed if you stick to it. Something will probably occur which will put new vigour and fresh thoughts into you. Don't give it up." How truly prophetic were his words. Three days afterwards his father died suddenly of aneurism. On the evening of his funeral the poor fellow, heart-broken as he was, sat down to bury his grief in his work. How fully he did so we only recognise

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when we listen to the sorrowful long-drawn strains of his "In Memoriam" overture. It is so truly elegiac. What he had said was true enough, all that he needed was something suggestive to work upon, but he little thought how powerful that something was to be. Within eight days of his father's death, the work was finished and ready for the Festival.

I well remember the first time I heard the "In Memoriam." I had not long returned from Italy. Whilst living in one of the smaller villages on the banks of Como I had been much interested by the funeral of a resident, who, a dignitary in his way, was buried with full musical honours. Certainly he had left sufficient money to pay for the services of the band, otherwise its attendance would have been extremely doubtful in spite of the position which he had occupied in his lifetime. The multiplicity and variety of the ceremonies performed were quite new to me, and impressed me greatly at the time. But since my return to London, I had thought no more of this than of any other of numerous Italian recollections. I had hitherto been unfortunate with regard to "In Memoriam." Each time I had made up my mind to hear it something had happened to

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prevent me. I therefore grasped the next opportunity which came in my way, although at the hands of the band in question I in no wise expected to hear a perfect performance of it. I listened attentively to the opening *andante religioso*, so full of fervent feeling, and to the violins and violas giving out their "Chopinesque" phrase accompanied by the stately "pizzicati" of the basses; but when the lovely melody in E flat, sustained first by the clarionets, then by the flutes and violins, fell upon my ears, the whole scene of the funeral in the little Italian village was brought vividly before me. I saw the long line of bareheaded *contadini* walking two abreast, each carrying a lighted taper—the *fanciulli* running out of their doors, every whit as eager as if it were a circus; the strains of the overture seemed to me the strains of that little Italian band, as it wended its way slowly along the narrow village street to the little *campo-santo* nestling at the foot of the hill. All seemed reality itself. I have read similar impressions recorded by musicians and others, but never have I myself experienced anything like the graphic picture which this music called up before me.

Of the other works composed by Sullivan at

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this period the most important were the Concertino for violoncello and orchestra introduced by Piatti at the Crystal Palace Concerts, and the "Contrabandista." The latter was important, for in it he developed one stage further what he had already demonstrated in "Cox and Box"—namely, that it was possible to be humorous in music, and not wholly dependent upon waltz and polka rhythms. These two works were, as regards the composer, the germ from which sprung the whole series of Gilbert and Sullivan creations. An overture entitled "Marmion" was commissioned by the Philharmonic Society and produced by them in June 1867. In this same year he was appointed an English juror for the Paris Exhibition and was for some considerable time in the French capital. In the autumn, in company with his friend Sir (then Mr.) George Grove, he left for Vienna in search of the Schubert MSS. which have since become so well known. Of this Sir George has given a most interesting description in his Appendix to Mr. A. D. Coleridge's translation of Dr. Heinrich Kreissler's Life of Schubert. As it so closely concerns the musician I will quote from it.

"In the autumn of '67 a succession of fortu-

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nate circumstances, for which I can never be too grateful, put it into my power to visit Vienna in company with a gentleman who is at once one of my best friends and—in the absence of Mr. Manns, then unable to leave his duties—better able than any one else to advise and assist me in my search, namely, Mr. Arthur Sullivan."

After describing at length how the scores of the various Schubert Symphonies came into their possession he goes on to say, "But I had failed in one chief object of my journey. The 'Rosamunde' music was almost dearer to me than the symphonies. Besides the Entr'actes in B minor and B flat, the Ballo No. 2 and the Ballet Air No. 9 which we had already acquired, we had found at Mr. Spina's an entr'acte after the second act, and a 'Hirten-Melodie' for clarionets, bassoons, and horns; but we still required the accompaniments to the romance and the two Choruses, as well as the total number of pieces and their sequence in the drama. To quit Vienna without these would have been too cruel, and yet neither from Dr. Schneider nor Mr. Spina, nor in the library of the Musik-Verein—where the admirable librarian Mr. C. F. Pohl was entirely at our service—had we

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succeeded in finding a trace of them. It was Thursday afternoon, and we proposed to leave on Saturday for Prague. We made a final call on Dr. Schneider, to take leave and repeat our thanks, and also, as I now firmly believe, guided by a special instinct. The doctor was civility itself; he again had recourse to the cupboard, and showed us some treasures which had escaped us before. I again turned the conversation to the 'Rosamunde' music—he believed that he had at one time possessed a copy or sketch of it all. Might I go into the cupboard and look for myself? Certainly, if I had no objection to being smothered with dust. In I went, and after some search, during which my companion kept the doctor engaged in conversation, I found, at the bottom of the cupboard and in its farthest corner, a bundle of music books two feet high, carefully tied round, and black with the undisturbed dust of nearly half a century. It was like the famous scene at the Monastery of Souriani on the Natron lakes, so well described by Mr. Curzon:—'Here is a box:' exclaimed the two monks, who were nearly choked with dust. 'We have found a box, and a heavy one too.' 'A box!' shouted the blind abbot who was standing in the outer

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darkness of the oil cellar—'a box! Where is it?' 'Bring it out—bring out the box! Heaven be praised! we have found a treasure! Lift up the box! Pull out the box!' shouted the monks in various tones of voice.

"We were hardly less vociferous than the monks when we had dragged out the bundle into the light, and found that it was actually neither more nor less than what we were in search of. . . . . There were the part books of the whole of the music in 'Rosamunde,' tied up after the second performance, in December 1823, and probably never disturbed since. . . . . It was now late in the day, but we summoned our kind and faithful friend Pohl to our aid, and by dint of dividing our work into three, and writing our hardest, we contrived before two in the morning to get all the missing accompaniments copied, as well as every note and stage direction that could throw light on the connection between the drama and the music."

How both enjoyed themselves we can easily imagine, for he goes on: "We had a piano to ourselves and were allowed to do as we liked for several hours,"—which, when we remember that one of them was a pianist as well

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as a composer, and that both were Schubert worshippers, conveys a vast deal.

On his way back, the Leipsic Concert Direction hearing of Sullivan's presence in the town, invited him to conduct his "In Memoriam" Overture, than which they could have paid him no greater compliment. Once back in London, he settled down to work again, producing a number of songs, hymn-tunes, anthems, etc., and finally completed his first really important choral work. This, which had been commissioned by the committee of the Worcester Festival, was "The Prodigal Son." It was produced in 1869 with Titiens, Trebelli, Sims Reeves and Santley in the solo parts, and set the seal upon his reputation as a composer. The Press recognised that his ability had been put to a severer test than it ever had before. He had, they said, long been the hope of English music—the man whose promise for the future seemed most trustworthy. Till then they had looked to him expectantly; now although they expected still, it was with a difference. He followed it up with one of the most beautiful of all his works, the "Overture di Ballo," written for the Birmingham Festival. While couched throughout in dance rhythms, the

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overture is in strict form, and for melodic charm, graceful fancy, and delicacy of treatment it is difficult to rival it amongst modern music.

Sullivan at this time was thrown much into contact with Gounod and other French musicians, many of whom took refuge here during the siege. He was on the Mansion House Committee for the relief of distress in Paris, and directly the news arrived that the Versailles troops had got into the city and had vanquished the Communards, he rushed off to Paris, accompanied by his friends Grove and W. von Glehn, arriving there two days after the troops. His description of what he saw is interesting. "Paris," he says, "was burning—arrests were being made in every street, and miserable looking creatures were being marched off to Satory every minute. But in spite of this, trade and other occupations were all alive again. I never ate a better breakfast than I had at Voisin's the morning of my arrival. Worth, to whom I paid a visit, was open again, and showed me three lovely new shades of pink he was bringing out now that the war was over. Desclée and Ravel were playing in a theatre on the Boulevards—I forget which—but I remember that it was very badly lighted, and the cafés

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were full of officers. But everything had to be shut up, and all lights put out by ten o'clock, and it was not safe for a foreigner to be out in the streets after that hour."

I should have mentioned that from as far back as 1863, when on the occasion of the marriage of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales he was asked to compose the music, Arthur Sullivan has been really nothing more nor less than a musician-laureate. The music which he has written for all kinds of public functions forms no insignificant portion of the catalogue of his work. "On Shore and Sea" was written at this period for the opening of the International Exhibition at South Kensington in 1871, for which Gounod also wrote "Gallia," and in the following year came the Festival Te Deum in celebration of the recovery of the Prince of Wales.*

This was an extremely active period of his career. He conducted the "Classical Nights" at the Covent Garden Promenade Concerts,

* For the opening of the Indian and Colonial Exhibition by the Queen in 1886 he wrote an ode with Lord Tennyson, and in 1887 an ode with Lewis Morris for the ceremony of laying the foundation-stone of the Imperial Institute by Her Majesty.

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wrote the "Light of the World" for the Birmingham Festival, and conducted the performance himself, travelled much on the Continent for the purpose of getting together a permanent orchestra for the Royal Aquarium, and having got it together, conducted a series of concerts there, then finished off the last of three tremendously busy years by writing "Trial by Jury" with Mr. Gilbert, and conducting the winter concerts of the Glasgow Choral Union.

"Trial by Jury" had, on the strength of "Thespis," been commissioned by Mr. D'Oyly Carte for Miss Selina Dolaro, who occupied the Royalty Theatre and for whom he was at that time manager. There is no doubt that apart from the drollery of both words and music, it owed no small part of its success to the composer's brother Frederick, whose blending of official dignity, condescension, and—at the right moment—extravagant humour, raised his performance of the Judge to the level of a highly artistic creation.

The well-nigh simultaneous production of two works so widely apart as were this Operetta, and "The Light of the World" seems to have considerably perplexed some of those who were watching the composer's career. But the late

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Mr. Davison, who, whatever else he may have been, was an intelligent critic, saw further ahead. In remarking upon this Birmingham Oratorio he expressed his opinion that musical life in England was on the eve of a revival in all its forms, from the lowest to the highest—in the latter most of all. He recognised the phenomenon, though he confessed its causes were for the present hidden from view. But although this was so, the present results (by which he referred to "The Light of the World") were plain enough, and of such a nature as to excite the highest expectation and hope for a golden era of English music such as that which conferred lustre upon the sixteenth century.

The work seems to have caused intense enthusiasm wherever it was produced. After its performance in Manchester, a number of gentlemen entertained the composer at supper, and in the course of the evening presented him with an old silver goblet containing a purse of £200. In a genial speech Mr. Fox Turner explained that the gift was the result of a purely spontaneous movement on the part of a few of Mr. Sullivan's admirers who wished thereby to express their appreciation of his genius and their personal regard.

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His fame had now spread beyond the confines of his own country, and amongst other practical expressions of recognition he received a highly complimentary letter from the Cav. Mazzucato, director of the Royal Conservatorio of Milan, containing a pressing invitation to visit that city and produce there some of his compositions. Although unable, owing to his engagements at home, to accept it at the time, he did so later, and was accorded a most cordial and flattering reception. Before one fully realises the value of this, it is necessary to have experienced the enormous prejudice which exists and always has existed in Italy against English musicians. In their eyes, no good can come out of England musically, and the only exception which—so far as I can recollect—they have ever made in our favour, was contained in the expressions of approval to which the Milan press gave vent in connection with this visit of Sullivan. This is, of course, nothing more nor less than patriotic ignorance. In isolated instances I have proved it to be so. It was my good fortune to be thrown for a considerable time in contact with the late Francesco Lamperti, who, besides being one of the most consummate masters of vocal art the world has

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known, was a true musician, and a man of toler ably broad views. But he would never admit of the existence of serious English music. I felt quite sure that he was too sincere an artist not to admit of excellence and beauty when he recognised it, no matter from what country it might emanate. One day (some few months only before his death) I proposed to him that we should try a little English music, and suggested that he should listen while I gave him as good an idea of "The Golden Legend" as I could from the vocal score. After many wry faces and shrugs of disapproval, he consented. Avoiding the "Prologue"—of which not even complete suggestion could be realised from the pianoforte—I commenced at the second scene. For some time he sat in his armchair and listened in silence. This was a good sign, for frequently with modern Italian music it would be *basta, basta,* before one had gone through half a dozen pages. After I had finished Elsie's lovely melody in F sharp major with its syncopated accompaniment, I turned round to look at him, and saw that he was enjoying it thoroughly. I said nothing, but went straight on. In the very next number, where Elsie sings "When Christ ascended triumphantly" (one

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of the most stirring pieces of music in existence), he rose from his chair, thoroughly enthusiastic. Seeing that I had quite won the day, I pretended to get up from the piano. No, he would not hear of any such thing, and nothing would do but we should go right through to the end of the work. I never heard him speak a word against *la musica Inglese* after that, and I am quite sure, had it not been for the language—which he never could tolerate from a vocal point of view—that he would have insisted upon his pupils studying "The Golden Legend."

Shortly after the production of "The Light of the World" Sullivan had received from the University of Cambridge the honorary degree of Mus. Doc., and two years later, a great deal of pressure being brought to bear upon him, he accepted very unwillingly the post of Principal to the National Training School for Music. He had, as we have seen, always been averse to teaching, and it says much for the greatness of his good nature, that he put aside his own feelings in the matter, and really gave himself up to what he looked upon as a sense of duty, by undertaking, and therefore perfectly performing, a task for which he had no inclination whatever.

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His Principalship was but a few months old when he was dealt a severe blow by the death of his brother Frederick, who as an actor would, had he lived, undoubtedly have made a great career. For nearly three weeks he watched by his bedside night and day. One night—the end was not very far off then—while his sick brother had for a time fallen into a peaceful sleep, and he was sitting as usual by the bedside, he chanced to come across some verses of Adelaide Procter's with which he had some five years previously been much struck. He had then tried to set them to music, but without satisfaction to himself. Now in the stillness of the night he read them over again, and almost as he did so, he conceived their musical equivalent. A stray sheet of music paper was at hand, and he began to write. Slowly the music grew and took shape, until, becoming quite absorbed in it, he determined to finish the song. Even if in the cold light of day it were to prove worthless, it would at least have helped to while away the hours of watching. So he worked on at it. As he progressed, he felt sure this was what he had sought for and failed to find on the occasion of his first attempt to set the words. In a short time it was complete,

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and not long after in the publisher's hands. Thus was written "The Lost Chord," perhaps the most successful song of modern times, at all events one whose sale has, up to now, exceeded 250,000 copies.

The success of "Trial by Jury" had been sufficient to raise in the breast of Mr. D'Oyly Carte the greatest hopes for a long and prosperous collaboration between Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan. On the strength of the confidence he placed in them, he formed a company, with the sole object of testing the public's liking for their work. This was called the Comedy Opera Company. It was not long in commencing operations, and the first outcome of the combination was "The Sorcerer," an original modern comic opera in two acts, which succeeded in holding the stage of the Opera Comique for six months. If for no other reason, it deserves—as Mr. Gilbert says—to live in the memory of theatre-goers on account of its having introduced Mr. George Grossmith and Mr. Rutland Barrington to the professional stage. It was at that time a matter of the very greatest difficulty to find artists who could both sing and act, yet for the success of their work such artists were absolutely essential. Nevertheless they undertook

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to write a successor to "The Sorcerer," and May of 1878 saw the production of "H.M.S. Pinafore." This, like many another of the composer's works, was written while suffering the most intense physical pain from a malady which, having first given signs of its existence in 1872, has never since left him. The only way in which there was any hope of getting "Pinafore" completed in time was by writing piece by piece in the intervals when he was comparatively free from pain. And this he did. He would be lying prostrate on his bed one half-hour, the next he would be perhaps writing a patter song. Amongst the many thousands who heard those rollicking choruses, those musical quips and cranks, that hugely grim music of Dick Deadeye, how few who knew, or knowing would have believed, that they were the work of a man suffering well nigh the tortures of the damned!

As if to prove the glorious uncertainty of things theatrical "Pinafore" failed to attract the public, and after a very fair trial, it was decided, if no improvement was apparent in the next few nights, to withdraw it. At this critical moment Sullivan undertook the conductorship of the Covent Garden Promenade Concerts. Amongst the pieces which he produced was an arrange-

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ment of the "Pinafore" music, made by his friend Hamilton Clarke for Orchestra and Military Band. This was received nightly with rapturous applause, and frequently repeated two and even three times. At the same time the opera "caught on" in America to such an extent that it literally raged through the country. Whether for one or both of these reasons it is impossible to say, but surely enough from that time the receipts gradually crept up, and twenty-two months hence "H.M.S. Pinafore" was still in the bills. From start to finish it held the stage for seven hundred nights. In Boston U.S.A. it was no uncommon thing for people to go as many as ten and twelve times to see, and then, not content with that, they would insist upon their friends' attendance, one and all. It so overcame the prejudices of church members against the theatre that on one occasion some three hundred persons who had never been inside a theatre in their lives visited the Boston Museum while the opera was being performed there. In a newspaper of the time—an American one—I find a notice to the effect that in one city alone a hundred thousand barrel-organs were built to play nothing but "Pinafore." "What never? Well, hardly ever," became

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catch phrases to an extent perfectly nauseating. One poor editor was positively compelled to forbid their use by his staff on pain of instant dismissal. "It has occurred twenty times in as many articles in yesterday's edition," he sorrowfully said to them on one occasion. "Never let me see it used again." "What never?" was the unanimous question. "Well, hardly ever," replied the wretched man.

Sullivan was now appointed Royal Commissioner for Music at the Paris Exhibition. With "Pinafore" in the full tide of prosperity he accepted gladly, and lost no time in getting away to the gay city. But he found he had undertaken no light task, and many were the tussles between him and the French Commission.

For his services in connection with the Exhibition he received the Legion d'Honneur. But a rarer if not a greater distinction was conferred upon him by the "Société des Concerts" of the Paris Conservatoire, for they proposed a performance of his "In Memoriam" Overture at one of their concerts. It was the first occasion in the annals of the Conservatoire, of the work of an Englishman forming part of their very exclusive programme. Writing after the

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concert to an intimate friend in London, he says: "Besides the *audition d'essai* I had three rehearsals for the first performance, another for the second. I sat by the conductor (M. Deldevez) and indicated my wishes to him. No one was present at the rehearsal except M. Ambroise Thomas, who throughout showed me the utmost consideration and kindness. Great pains were taken to perform the work well, and I have no reason to complain of any want of care and attention. At each rehearsal the band applauded me with hearty goodwill, which I acknowledged by simply bowing. At the first concert the public (the most *difficile* and spoilt in Europe) were, as I thought, rather cold in their applause, although the band, with whom I chatted in the artists' room afterwards, told me that I might be well content, for they generally received all new works in silence. 'Le public ici est toujours très circonspect,' said one of them. I should have been pleased with a little less 'circumspection' and a little more 'disregard.' However, at the second performance I had no cause to be dissatisfied, for they applauded most enthusiastically, and I amused myself afterwards by standing in the *foyer* and listening to the laudatory remarks made by the people as they

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came out. But the deepest gratification I experienced was the reception accorded to me by the band at the last rehearsal. As I afterwards learned they were angry at the moderately warm reception of the overture by the public, and were determined to show me *their* estimation of me and my work; consequently at the conclusion of the overture (which they played superbly) they broke out into applause which at last became a veritable ovation. Over and over again they cheered and (delicious sound to the composer!) tapped on the backs of their instruments. This enthusiasm was so unexpected that it nearly upset me, but when it had subsided and there was an ominous silence, I felt I must say something, so I whispered to M. Deldevez, 'Will you allow me to thank them?' He replied, 'Do, they would like it!' So I supported myself on the conductor's desk (I was dreadfully nervous), and made a little speech which was, so far as I can recollect, as follows (speaking very slowly so as to frame my sentences):—

'Messieurs,—Je ne veux pas prendre votre temps, et j'ignore si c'est selon l'usage de faire un "speech" au milieu d'une répetition, mais je ne connais que le sentiment de mon cœur qui

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me pousse à vous exprimer toute ma gratitude pou l'accueil si cordial que vous m'avez temoigné. Dans cet accueil je trouve l'echo du même sentiment de sympathie que j'eprouve pour les Français, car nous autres Anglais sommes toujours heureux quand un artiste Français reussit chez nous.' (Great applause, which gave me time to think of what I should say next.) 'La dernière fois que j'étais à Paris on m'a envoyé la veille de mon départ, cette decoration' (pointing to the Legion of Honour in my button hole). 'Tant que je suis fier de cet honneur, il est depassé par ce que vous m'avez fait en mettant mon nom sur vos programmes. Croyez moi que j'eprouve une grande emotion en entendant mon ouverture executé par l'orchestre magnifique et historique du Conservatoire, et je vous remercie de tout mon cœur.'

"This was received with immense applause, and I retired with my heart in my mouth. It is bad enough to have to speak in English, but in French it is terrifying. It would be an ungracious return for so much kindness were I to criticise the performance or performers, but I may frankly say that the orchestra is a very fine one, and the wood-wind absolutely perfect. Their tone is lovely."

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On his return to London, his old enemy once more laid him low, and he was ordered, by Sir Henry Thompson, complete rest and repose coupled with a course of the waters at Evain.

While in Paris on his way thither, matters came to a crisis, and he had to undergo an operation. This of course changed his plans. However, in three weeks time he had rallied sufficiently to go on to Pontresina. Here, in the invigorating air of the Engadine, he made rapid strides towards recovery. There was no specified "cure" to be undergone, no rising at four o'clock in the morning to drink thick warm water, no abstinence from all kinds of enjoyment or amusement, such as generally go to constitute that obnoxious ordeal which we call a "cure." On the contrary he took away with him nothing but the pleasantest recollections Here he found gathered together many of his English acquaintances. For the benefit of the English Church they got up a performance of "Cox and Box," with the greatest of good results. Small wonder, when we contemplate the caste:

Box	Mr. Arthur Cecil.
Cox	Mr. Arthur Sullivan.
Bouncer	Mr. Joseph Barnby.

Pianoforte, Mr. Otto Goldschmidt.

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Besides this, Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft played a charming little one-act piece, and other enthusiastic workers for the cause were found in Madame Ristori, Mr. Edmund Yates, and Mr. George Lewis. His stay, short as it was, worked wonders for him, and he returned to London a different man. He resumed the conduct of the Promenade Concerts at Covent Garden, and set to work without loss of time upon the opera which was to follow "Pinafore." This was the "Pirates of Penzance."

Mainly for reasons relating to that mysterious will-o'-the-wisp which we term "copyright," it was decided to produce the new work in the first instance in New York. "Pinafore" had put thousands of pounds into the pockets of the American publishers, and piracies of the score and parodies of the performance had been countless. From the publication of the music the author and composer received £100 between them, while at one theatre in New York the bum-boat woman "Little Buttercup" was played by a man, Ralph Rackstraw by a woman, and the opera was 'strengthened' by the addition of topical songs, such as "Jack is every inch a sailor," and other horrible compilations. It was clear that such a state of things could not go on.

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So at the end of October, with the second act of the "Pirates" complete (the first act was composed in New York), Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan started for America, together with the late Alfred Cellier and Mr. D'Oyly Carte and his company. What they experienced in that country would form a volume in itself, and to enter into it here is manifestly impossible.

In the following March the composer returned to London, having triumphantly launched his "Pirates" in New York, and the commencement of April saw it produced at the Opera Comique. There it remained for a year, leaving him free to get to work upon an oratorio which he had promised to contribute to the Leeds Festival. His selection of a poem fell upon Milman's "Martyr of Antioch." It was produced at the Festival under his own direction and enthusiastically received both by the public and the press.

In the next year came "Patience" and the opening of the new Savoy Theatre, to which the opera was transplanted from the Opera Comique. Then we have him in Cairo for three months, and consequent expectation in London of Egyptian symphonies and Bakshish overtures as a result. At "Shepheard's" and the "Khe

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dive" Club he was a familiar figure, and who knows that he may not have heard at the Grand Café Egyptien "The Martyr of Antioch" done into quadrilles. If Wagner had gone there at the right moment, he would have heard—to use Mr. Beatty Kingston's happy description—"the Hollander's awful utterances transmogrified into the cheeriest of 'hands across and down the middle,' rendered with an energy that approaches the humorous by stringed orchestras of young Bohemian damsels, brought over *en bloc* from out-of-the-way little towns over the Silesian and Saxon frontiers of the most musical province in Europe."

The next year brought with it sorrow and misfortune. From these even this favoured child of fortune was not to be free. No sooner had he arrived from the East than the blow fell upon him. His mother died. A greater sorrow could not have befallen him. The gifted son, laden with all the distinction, admiration, and sympathy of his countrymen—the great man in the eyes of the world—was still to her the little boy who, with his genial nature and lively spirit, had always been the idol of his father and mother. And in his turn his home life was always the life he loved. Success, sweet as

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it was to him and is to all, had in no wise altered him. To say that he was sincerely and devotedly attached to her is no mere figure of speech. Her fifteen years of widowhood had made him all the more to her. And those fifteen years had been very eventful ones in his life. His father had been taken from him at the dawn of his career, but there was comfort in the thought that his mother had lived to see him, if not in the full meridian, well in the sunshine of his success. But her death left a void in his life which he found difficult indeed to fill. It was not alone the parent, but the friend that he missed. Often it is the case with those given to the pursuit of any art such as literature or music, that they feel the want of an intellectual sympathy and interest which it is not in the power of the parents to give. But with him it was not so, and whatever his trouble, whatever his joy, a kindly encouragement and a loving sympathy had always been his. Fate gives us our parents though we select our friends, and fate if now cruel had been kind to him.

But misfortune of another nature was yet in store for him. A friendly firm—mark the term —with whom he had deposited all the savings of years, proved their appreciation of his trust

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by making away with all his securities. It seemed as if all that was his was to be taken from him. Save his art! He could never lose that. Though he lose those dear to him, though he lose worldly fortune, he could always find solace in his music. So plucking up courage, he threw himself into it with all the energy he could command. It was summer, so he went to a little place called Bertrich, and there he sketched the greater part of his new work, "Iolanthe."

He had the year previously resigned his post of Principal at the Royal Training College, and was free to devote himself entirely to composition. It was at this time that the National Training School became "The Royal College of Music," with a Royal Charter and no small amount of Royal patronage. In his speech delivered at the opening ceremony, the Prince of Wales said many happy things, but in none was he happier than in his conclusion: "Her Majesty authorises me to say that she proposes to confer the honour of knighthood upon Professor Macfarren and Dr. Sullivan. If anything could add to my satisfaction in making this statement, it is that these honours are bestowed at the advice of the Prime Minister who has

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taken so kind an interest in the promotion of the Royal College, and could have devised no better mode of celebrating its opening than by recommending that honour should be done on this occasion to music by conferring knighthood on men so celebrated in their art as Professor Macfarren and Dr. Sullivan."

Some ten years before it was that Julius Benedict, John Goss, and George Elvey had been similarly honoured. And strange as it may appear that in what was formerly a purely military distinction should now be found a convenient reward for the successful politician, the tradesman who shall happen to be mayor of a borough during a chance royal visit, and the man of art alike—he who is thus honoured cannot but feel gratified at such public recognition of his efforts. *Noblesse oblige*—true enough. But there was nothing pertaining to his art that Mr. Arthur Sullivan did that Sir Arthur Sullivan should not do. The former was a true artist, and the distinction which he gained when he became the latter was a public recognition of that fact. But there was no change in his artistic identity. Therefore 'twere surely folly to say (as some did) that a musical knight could hardly write comic opera, and that he must not

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dare to soil his hands with anything less dignified than an anthem or a madrigal, an oratorio or a symphony. Could any musician show a greater reverence for his art than Mr. Arthur Sullivan did in "Iolanthe"? Is it not pure music and therefore every whit as worthy in its own way as was the "Ivanhoe" of Sir Arthur Sullivan? Could he show a better sense of his appreciation as a public representative of our music than by giving that great enjoyment which he has given to the many, as well as that which he has given to the few. Granted there are different standards of art. But there is no show of reason that because a man has the genius to excel in whatever he touches he should be restricted to one standard alone. A man thus greatly gifted may surely use his gifts one and all. Some of us may wish that his examples of what, for want of a better term, we call 'serious' music, should be in excess of those of the other and lighter form which some may dub 'frivolous.' Others, on the other hand, may not. Others again call for something that they term 'great,' which greatness, when they are asked to define it, would seem to consist for the most part in the obtrusion of the technique. They clamour for counterpoint, in a single or double variety, as

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they would for a dahlia. Give them their blossom and it will be as a specimen of an *Alice Emily* or an *Alba simplex* that they will value it rather than for its beauty as a flower, just as they will gloat over their counterpoint as an example of the third, fourth, or fifth 'species.' Of Gounod, a member of this class once said to me, "Why, he couldn't write a fugue to save his life." Supposing for the sake of argument one agrees with this person, why should he? Does the man who penned the score of "Faust" need to write a fugue to demonstrate his consummate musicianship? The hand of the skilled contrapuntist is evident in every bar of that music. But it is a means only to an end. It is the genius that is primarily apparent, not the contrapuntist. And so it is with the comic operas of Arthur Sullivan. The musicianship which was so patent in "Pinafore," the "Pirates," and "Patience," has been brought to the highest possible pitch of perfection in "Iolanthe," "Mikado," "Yeomen of the Guard," and "Gondoliers." He that seeks a felicitous use and not an obnoxious abuse of contrapuntal means, let him look from Overture to Finale in the first part of "Iolanthe." And who but a master of form could have sustained such a finale?

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Was ever musical conceit more beautiful than the duet in the second act, "You wicked Peers! Don't go?" As to him of the 'advanced' cult, to whom music is no longer music without *leit motives*, I would that he direct his attention upon the fugal suggestion with which the Lord Chancellor enters, and say, Is it not learned? Has it not dignity? In short, is it not the very essence of the character? Is not its use throughout the score worthy of the "master" himself?

In the "Mikado" I think he has excelled all previous efforts in that he is more completely at one with his librettist. Never were Mr. Gilbert's jokes more delicate, never were his rhyming and rhythmic gifts more conspicuously displayed. His extreme earnestness and *soi-disant* simplicity and his cynicism are the essence of his wit. And they are difficult indeed to catch in music. But Sullivan is every whit as quaint, as scornful, as "inverted"—if you will—in his music, as is Gilbert in his philosophy. He is the vivid musical reflection of his humour. In the opening chorus of men, the colour—obtained chiefly by orchestral means—is the quaintest imaginable, and again the Finale to the first act is such as he alone could write. In the second act gem

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follows gem. The treatment of the lyric commencing "The sun whose rays" reveals the master of rhythm, as that of the "Madrigal" does the master of vocal part-writing. "*Here's a how de do*" is brimful of humour. So is Koko's music. True, there are repetitions of what we have had before, but they are rather matters of musical treatment than of material. He shows his predilection for certain forms of accompaniment. There are certain means for effect which previous experience has told him do their work well, and he does not hesitate to resort to them. He bows now to Mozart, now to Gounod—frequently in orchestration to Berlioz. But there is no one who knows better how to accomplish much with little than Sullivan. When we consider the orchestra at his command the results he obtains are surprising. There are no scores that look quite the same on paper as his. He knows exactly where to put his hand on an instrument and better still when to take it away.

If for any of the operas he confesses to a weakness for the "Yeomen of the Guard," and it is difficult not to agree with him. It does not sparkle and scintillate like the "Mikado," but it has an atmosphere about it all its own.

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His "Haddon Hall" is perhaps the nearest akin to it. In the opening number, which is no chorus, but a solo for Phœbe, his interpretation of the line "'Tis but a little word, heigh-ho," is truly beautiful in its simplicity. It is strange to find him in one of the leading themes of the opera, harking back so far as his early setting of Shakespeare's "Sigh no more, ladies." Yet, harmonically and melodically speaking, there is little of difference between the opening phrases of the two compositions. The overture is here in strict form, though small in development, the subject-matter being culled from the body of the work. In the third number we have one of the most characteristic bits of music he has ever given us. It occurs to the words, "The screw may twist, and the rack may turn." Here is as vivid a realisation of these highly unpleasant operations as could be got without any of the corresponding disadvantages. Fairfax's song, "Is life a boon?" besides being typically "English," shows how the composer is at one with his librettist. The serious treatment which he has given the words:

"What kind of plaint have I
Who perish in July?
I might have had to die
Perchance in June"—

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intensifies the humour of them tenfold. Then when we come to Point's song, we have one of the quaintest combinations of Bach and Schubert imaginable. No man unversed in the work of those masters could have written it. It is perhaps in his use of the wood-wind more than in anything else that he recalls the latter.

"O little ring, that bearest in thy circlet all
The gladness that love hopes for and that poets sing,
What bringest thou to me but gold and sadness?"

For purity and pathos it were impossible to surpass the setting of these words. The rhythmical treatment of them is so perfectly nice, the melodic so absolutely simple. Again, if we look for more purely musicianly resource, we have only to turn to Phœbe's song, "Were I thy bride," for a facility and wealth of modulation hitherto unknown in the realms of comic opera. The duet between Point and Wilfred is another example of dry musical humour, while I think there can be no question that the quartet in the second act, "When a wooer goes a-wooing," is one of the most supremely beautiful things he has ever done.

In "The Gondoliers" we are once more in the genial atmosphere of his musical comedy.

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The score is brimful of life and exuberance. Perhaps you will say it cannot lay equal claim to originality with its predecessor—that, for instance, without Verdi's "Questa o quella," Marco's solo, "Take a pair of sparkling eyes," would not be as it is, and that there is more than one whiff of Bizet in it. And perhaps these things are true. "The Gondoliers" would prove no barren ground for the reminiscence hunter. Yet it is no paradox to say that it is frequently when under the spell of another, that he is most himself. For whoever that other may be—be he Schubert or Mendelssohn, Gounod or Bizet—it is only in the light of Sullivan he is visible. And thereby the latter's own individuality is the more prominently thrown up. The Venetian scene in the opera reveals the influence of Rossini, as it does that of Auber, yet never for a moment do we fail to recognise the hand of Sullivan. For downright cleverness it were surely difficult to surpass the quartet, "In contemplative fashion," or if we seek a number more "Sullivanesque" than its fellows, we can do no better than turn to the duet of Casilda and Luiz, "There was a time." Throughout the score, the music simply—to use the words of his librettist—"hops and skips to

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fancy's fiddle." The *savoire faire* is so exact, and he seems incapable of a musical *faux pas*. Could anything be more dainty than the opening chorus of *Contadini?* Whatever he wishes to achieve is accomplished in the happiest, the most facile fashion. One cannot but notice his predilection for the pedal-bass in his accompaniments. At times the musician can have no agent more capable of aiding his rhythm than this. Again, his indulgence in six-eight rhythm is great, but the variety he manages to extract from it is equally so.

At another time he will gain his end by the simple purity of a piece of perfect part-writing, in which we marvel at the power of his straightforward good old English diatonic progressions. Then the ingenuity he displays in the combination of melodic material, and the ease and grace of his vocal style, his economy of means, are one and all worthy of the highest appreciation. All these things I say go to make the operas perfect art works of their kind, and when we take the genius of the librettist in conjunction with that of the composer, the Gilbert and Sullivan opera, as exemplified in "The Mikado" or "The Yeomen of the Guard," assumes the dignity of a "creation." It is one

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of the artistic features of the latter half-century. About this there can be no possible doubt. Its popularity moreover has been such as to make a fortune for librettist, composer, and manager alike, and that not in England alone but all the world over. But it is in no wise upon their popularity that the worth of these operas depends. Popularity in itself is of little value; it may mean nothing or everything, for it may be that of "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay," or of the "Elijah." The one is a proof of worthlessness, the other of supremity. Then again, although we know that endurance is a palpable proof of greatness, it cannot in this case be fairly applied, for the reason that the very subjects treated of by the librettist are oft but transitory in their interest. Herein lies the sole cause for regret—if regret there must be—that the musician has expended so much time and labour upon such an opera as "Patience," for instance. But this is no reason why rabid Wagnerians and Brahmsians and musical pedants should patronise such music with that kindly condescension which is so typical of them. The value of the music *per se* is a thousand times greater than the work of those so-called "Wagnerians" who ape their

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master's mannerisms without one scrap of his genius.

The operas which we have cursorily discussed were all the outcome of the years following that in which he received knighthood. Besides them must be mentioned three others, "Princess Ida," "Ruddigore," and "Haddon Hall." Yet they by no means comprise the sum total of his ten years' work. In 1886 the wife of his late brother Frederick died. After the death of her husband, she had, acting under her brother-in-law's advice, settled with her family in Los Angelos. Consequently, on her death, Sir Arthur, with that kindliness of nature which is so prominent a characteristic of him, determined that no effort on his part should be wanting to help his young nephews to bear their loss, and in June of that year he sailed for America.

And here I must relate a story which has become so inseparably connected with Sullivan's visit to the far West that any biographical sketch, no matter how slight, would be deemed wanting without it. It is best given in his own words:

"I was travelling on a stage in rather a wild part of California, and arrived at a mining camp where we had to get down for refreshments. As we drove up, the driver said, 'They expect

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you here, Mr. Sullivan.' I was much pleased, and when I reached the place I came across a knot of prominent citizens at the whisky store. The foremost of them came up to a big burly man at my side and said: 'Are you Mr. Sullivan?' The man said 'No,' and pointed to me. The citizen looked at me rather contemptuously, and after a while said: 'Why! how much do you weigh?' I thought that was rather a curious method of testing the power of a composer, but I at once answered, 'About 162 pounds.' 'Well,' said the man, 'that's odd to me anyhow. Do you mean to say you gave fits to John S. Blackman down in Kansas City?' I said, 'No, I did not give him fits.' He then said, 'Well, who are you?' I replied, 'My name is Sullivan.' 'Ain't you John Sullivan the slogger?' I disclaimed all title to that and told him I was Arthur Sullivan. 'Oh, Arthur Sullivan!' he said. 'What, are you the man as put "Pinafore" together?'—rather a gratifying way of describing my composition! Nevertheless I said 'Yes.' 'Well,' returned the citizen, 'I am sorry you ain't John Sullivan, but still I am glad to see you any way—let's have a drink.' I had a drink, and received an invitation to pass as many days as I liked with them."

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He was away altogether some four months. His health, which had given him serious trouble, improved much from the change. He felt invigorated, and longed to work again. For some time he had been contemplating an oratorio or cantata, but had settled upon no subject in particular. At last he decided upon Longfellow's "Golden Legend," and applied to Mr. Joseph Bennett to adapt the poem for musical treatment. To obtain the absolute quiet and freedom necessary for such an effort, he knew he must leave London. Yet he could not be far away, if only on account of his engagement as conductor with the Philharmonic Society. So he went to York Town, Sandhurst, the home of his boyhood. There, midst the old familiar scenes, and a few old familiar faces, he set to work and sketched the whole of the "Legend." That done, he returned to London, and commenced orchestrating it, although it was not wanted for performance for some months. It has, as we have seen, invariably been his custom to leave the matter of orchestration until the last moment. With the comic operas this is of course, necessary. It forms a portion of a method based on a lengthy experience. In all other respects, be the words serious or otherwise,

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his mode of action is more or less similar. He always considers them primarily from a rhythmic point of view, trying them in every form of which they are capable before attempting to arrive at their melodic equivalent. Nothing satisfies him but the very nicest rise and fall—the minutest syllabic consideration. His measure once arrived at, he seeks his melody—often a far easier matter. Thus he proceeds until he has a hieroglyphic, but complete, sketch of the whole work. From this again—in the case of the comic operas—he writes out the vocal parts, which are duly copied and learned. Then comes a full rehearsal under the direction of the author and composer to a vamped pianoforte accompaniment, during which the "business" is all settled, and cuts and changes made. There then remains only the orchestration. The saving of time and labour by thus deferring his accompaniments until all "blue-penciling" is a thing of the past, is obviously very great. But in the case of a work such as the "Golden Legend," where the orchestra is no longer merely a means of suggestive accompaniment, the matter of scoring assumes a different aspect, and his method of working varies accordingly. Here he resorts to it as a means of absolute

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expression, and for achievement in this direction the "Golden Legend" is one of the scores of the century.

Longfellow's poem is neither a very powerful, nor indeed a very intelligible poem. It was undoubtedly derived in the first instance from Jacobus de Voragine's collection of "Legends of the Saints," which were written by the Italian bishop somewhere during the latter half of the thirteenth century. Than this collection of legends nothing was ever more popular, and not only were numerous copies of it made, but it was translated into well nigh every language. Of all the legends, "Der Arme Heinrich," as it was originally called, received by virtue of its greater popularity and undoubted superiority the title of "The Golden Legend." The translation into English we owe to Caxton. But in his "Golden Legend," there is mention of neither diabolic nor angelic influence. It is simply the story of a nobleman who, stricken with leprosy, journeys to the famous doctors of Salerno in quest of a cure for the disease, and is there informed that there is but one—the blood of an innocent maiden shed voluntarily for his sake. But in Longfellow's poem we have an additional element, and we have in To

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read but few pages to discover that it is but a variation of the oft-told tale of the tempter. Whether in his treatment of it the American poet was most influenced by Marlowe, by Calderon, or by Goethe, it were difficult to decide. One thing is certain—that evidence of the influence of "Faust" is by no means lacking. To mention one instance only, it is clear that Elsie's prayer, "My Redeemer and my Lord," was suggested by nothing but Margaret's prayer to the Virgin. And in certain minor points the influence is so strong that it not only suggests "Faust," but throws out a challenge of comparison between the two works. Never in the whole heathen world was god or goddess half so popular with the multitude as was that malicious demon of the middle ages in whom ignorant peasants and monks believed, and whom we have here once again in Lucifer. When Goethe introduced him to the nineteenth century, he endowed him with an additional and highly characteristic spirit for a typical modern devil—the spirit of irony and contempt. But Longfellow's "Lucifer" is at best but a half-hearted and weakly kind of fiend. He is never very diabolical; indeed, there are times when his lack of energy and resource is quite

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annoying. He is certainly the least satisfactory of all the characters in the poem. This fact Sullivan seems to have recognised. Yet Lucifer is by no means uninteresting as a musical figure. On the contrary, although bounded on the one side by Gounod, and on the other by Berlioz, he has given us in his Lucifer an absolutely original devil. That he was enabled to do this is no doubt, in a great measure, due to the fact of Lucifer making his appearance in the garb of a learned physician, and from this he took his cue. For the rest, Mr. Joseph Bennett has handled his subject very cleverly. It would have been the easiest thing in the world for him to have gone direct to the original source, and to have dispensed with Longfellow altogether. Many would have done so. But Mr. Bennett considered his musician before all else, and while adhering to the beautiful verse of the poet, he has, by doing away with scenes and characters superfluous, succeeded in providing a book which for concise and dramatic consistency is superior to the original. Four characters suffice him. The action he has divided into six scenes with prologue and epilogue, the two latter differing in no appreciable degree from the original. It would be

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difficult to find a scene more calculated to appeal to a master of the modern orchestra than this prologue where Lucifer is represented as calling upon the powers of the air to wreck the Cathedral of Strasburg. He has taken full advantage of it. The instrumentation is masterly, and what is more, novel, notwithstanding that it reveals to some extent the influence of Berlioz. This is especially noticeable in the brass and wood bands. But it is by no means on his instrumental resources alone that he relies for his effect in this prologue. He obtains equally as much from the vocal element employed, while his pronounced rhythmical faculty helps him not a little. After the chime of the Cathedral bells with which he opens, he plunges headlong into a whirlwind of string and wood, the brass—with the exception of a few notes from the horns—remaining silent. The bells have more or less established the tonality of G flat, and the effect of the orchestra commencing on the second inversion of the chord of the seventh on B flat is in itself sufficiently weird. Any attempt to adequately describe the fury of these rushing passages for the bass wood and string would be futile; suffice it to say that the same order

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of things holds sway until a long roll of the drums ushers in Lucifer with his—

"Hasten, hasten, oh ye spirits,
From its station drag the ponderous cross
That to mock us is uplifted high in air."

The spirits confess their impotence; then come the bells again, accompanied only by the bass strings and bass clarionet, while the voices chant their "Laudo Deum verum." Now a lull in this moving body of sound, but still the voice of the fiend rages on. "Lower! lower! Hover downwards! Seize the loud vociferous bells and clashing, clanging, to the pavement hurl them from their windy tower." On the words "clashing, clanging," the brass is brought to bear with tremendous effect. Once more the storm rages in full fury, and still we hear the imprecations of Lucifer and the weird replies of his "inefficient craven spirits," until at length "Baffled," he bids them leave their labour "unto Time, the great Destroyer." "Onward they go, over field and farm and forest, blighting all they breathe upon." Gradually the storm dies away until the fitful tremolo of the basses, the roll of the drums, and a few expiring tolls of the bells are all that remain

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to break the stillness. Then with the majesty of its tone increased tenfold by mere force of contrast, the organ enters, and the tenors and basses join in their hymn "Nocte Surgentes." This prologue alone, were the rest of the work ever so insignificant, would suffice to render "The Golden Legend" remarkable. As a graphic musical picture instinct with power and descriptive force as opposed to mere din and incoherency, it is one of the most prominent examples in modern music.

The first scene now opens. We are at Vautsberg, and Prince Henry, ill and sleepless, is praying for rest. "Rest! rest!" he says.

"Oh, give me rest and peace.
The thought of life that ne'er shall cease
Has something in it like despair,
A weight I am too weak to bear."

'Tis midnight, and while thus bemoaning his condition there comes to him a flash of lightning from out which Lucifer appears in the garb of a travelling physician. A rapid and descending semiquaver figure for piccolo, flutes and oboes depicts the flash, and we are introduced to the contrapuntal device which serves to indicate his learned character. An additional sardonic

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flavouring is given to it by its allotment to clarionets and bassoon playing *staccato*. Prince Henry then describes his disease. "It has no name," he says, "but is a smouldering dull perpetual flame." He tells Lucifer that the doctors of Salerno declare there is but one remedy. "Writ on this scroll," he says, "is the mystery." At these words we have in the orchestra a phrase (for flutes and clarionets in octaves) which having reference to the cure is heard later when Elsie resolves to sacrifice her life for the Prince.

Lucifer, laughing to scorn all idea of such a cure, produces his flask of "very subtle and magical power," and persuades the Prince to drink of its contents. It contains, he goes on, "the wonderful quintessence, the perfect flower of efflorescence of all the knowledge man can ask." Prince Henry taking it, says, "How limpid, pure, and crystalline the little wavelets dance and shine." It is obviously these words of Prince Henry's that the composer has taken as his cue for the accompaniment which he here uses. The "little wavelets" have evidently been in his mind. But without going into the question of whether it was the wisest proceeding to accompany Lucifer with a device suggested by

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the Prince's description, the use of the word "wavelets" as it stands does not seem to carry its full force. It is the line by which it is followed in the poem, "as were it the water of life in sooth," that constitutes the metaphor and completes the simile. Consequently by the omission of this line the suggestion is robbed of its strength. Still it has served the composer for one of his most piquant pieces of orchestration. Indeed in this respect the whole scene is specially remarkable. Nothing could be more delicious nor more original than the effect he obtains by using the harmonics of the violins to the words "limpid, pure, and crystalline," while as a background throwing it up the more, we have the warning chorus of the Angels bidding the Prince beware of his tempter. The musical description of the effect of the draught is no less happy, and I think the music here has more of sensuousness in it than anything its composer ever wrote. The rhythmically contrasted and vague accompaniment most perfectly conveys the instability and excited state of the Prince, and the close of the scene is a veritable fantasy.

With the second scene comes an exquisite little piece of writing for strings alone. We are at the farm at Odenwald, where for the time

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Prince Henry is staying. It is evening, and the villagers have gathered after their day's labour before the house of Ursula. The latter joins the instrumental prelude with a short song to the words, "Slowly, slowly up the wall," which in the poem are spoken by the abbot Ernestus, as he paces the cloisters, but which the librettist (having dispensed with Gottlieb) has substituted for the dialogue which here takes place between Gottlieb and Ursula, while the latter spins her wheel. At the close of the prelude lamps are lit in the house and they join together in the evening hymn, "O gladsome Light."

We soon have a reference by the orchestra to the phrase which we have previously heard as suggestive of Elsie's sacrifice. "Would I could do something for his sake," she sings. "That no one can," replies Ursula. "Unless some maiden of her own accord offers her life for that of her lord." Here is one of the finest effects in the score. A rapid semiquaver passage which we first had attending upon Elsie's question, "And must he die?" is now given to the violins, and ascending the scale to G flat in alt, remains there *tremolando* for a bar. Then follow four bars of oscillating syncopations for well nigh full orchestra, which forcibly suggest to us the

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struggle which is taking place in Elsie's mind before she finally decides and exclaims, "I will." This scene is by far the most touching in the drama, and remarkable for the simplicity of its language and the tenderness of the thought. Musically it is of surpassing beauty. All that one could wish is that there were more of it; that for instance the librettist had thought wise to include the "Legend of the Sultan's Daughter," and thereby have added to this wealth of melody and purely poetic music. Each bar seems here more perfectly beautiful, more purely emotional than the last. The heartfelt sympathy which he has for Ursula, and Elsie's glorification in her act of self-sacrifice, are so perfectly expressed. For musical workmanship, Elsie's prayer stands out as one of the most noteworthy features of the score. For several bars the *cor anglais* alone is used as a means of accompaniment, and the contrapuntal facility displayed is remarkable. Elsie now reveals her determination to the Prince, urging, as he hesitates to accept it, that her "life is little. Only a cup of water, but pure and limpid." Here is another orchestral touch which, as showing how fully the composer has realised the simplicity of her nature and the

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purity of the impulse which has prompted her action, should not be overlooked. Although it is one of the most important junctures of the story, although it is an act of heroism, the only instruments he uses to accompany Elsie's offer are two flutes, and the effect is all satisfying. But how many composers are there who would have resisted such an opportunity for *Sturm und drang*, for all the din of brass and drum? But here as elsewhere his unerring taste keeps him right. Prince Henry accepts the sacrifice, though his hesitation in doing so is less clearly shown than in the poem. Nor do we have any reference to the fact that the prince, troubled by the qualms of conscience, seeks comfort in the confessional where Lucifer, in the garb of priest, assures him that the Church will wholly absolve his sin, if sin it be. The librettist omitting this proceeds without delay on the journey to Salerno.

With the opening number of the second scene we have *nolens volens* a melodic and rhythmic similitude to Schubert's "Auf dem Wasser zu singen." We are on the road to Hirschau, and Prince Henry and Elsie with their attendants are on horseback. Here are the first lines of their duet:—

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"Onward and onward the highway runs to the distant city, impatiently bearing
Tidings of human joy and disaster, of love and of hate, of doing and daring."

And fine as they are, it can hardly be said that the rhythmical principle upon which they are constructed is distinguished for its clarity. Yet difficult as the rhythm must have been to catch, there is not the least obscurity in the setting of them. The description of the journey is replete with delicate touches from amongst which it is difficult to single out any for special mention and be just. But the interpolated phrases for the oboe on the words "All through life there are wayside inns where man may refresh his soul with love," and the short instrumental interlude with its wonderfully effective modulation from B flat to A major, played as "they turn down a green lane," seem to me truly poetical. Such touches of detail and minute colour as these it is that serve to heighten and complete the picture which remains in the memory when the work is done. A band of pilgrims is now heard chanting in the distance. Lucifer is in their midst disguised as a friar. The composer strips him of his contrapuntal garb and in its place imbues his music with a spirit of ribaldry, coupled with

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what is well nigh a burlesque of the pilgrim's music. The brass accompaniment to Lucifer's theme, and the combination of it with the chant of the pilgrims is a highly effective and most ingenious piece of work.

With the departure of Lucifer and the pilgrims comes a happy reference to the opening phrase of their duet, in the midst of which we have a striking transition from the key of G flat through that of D major. The orchestra then continues the conversation between Elsie and her Prince. They have now arrived at the coast, and Prince Henry sings: "It is the sea in all its vague immensity," and here, curiously enough, at the words "fading and darkening in the distance," we have yet another reminiscence of Schubert's "Auf dem Wasser;" while the manner in which the bass strings are employed strongly recalls Beethoven. Elsie's solo which follows has some charming touches of colour from the wood-wind, and at the close the chorus takes up the theme to the words "Christie Eleison," and calling upon his full orchestra, the composer comes to a magnificent climax and closes his scene.

In the next scene, Lucifer is once more the learned physician. Prince Henry explains that

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Elsie is the maiden who has promised to give up her life to cure him. "Does she without compunction, of her own free will, consent to this?" asks Lucifer. "Against all opposition," is the response. Then, turning to Elsie, Lucifer asks, "Have you thought well of it?" "I came not here to argue, but to die," she says—a reply more noteworthy for its point than for its consistency with her character. There now follows one of those exquisite pieces of pure unaccompanied part-writing of which he has given us so many examples, as to lead us to expect them as our right. There is true pathos here, and how beautiful are the words—

"O pure in heart! from thy sweet dust shall grow
Lilies, upon whose petals will be written
'Ave Maria' in characters of gold."

The insertion of them at this juncture is one of the happiest thoughts on the part of the librettist. In the poem, they are said to Elsie by Prince Henry when they are speaking together of her decision to sacrifice her life.

We now have from Elsie the melody in F sharp major which we have already heard in the second scene. At her concluding sentence, "There is no more to say, let us go

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in," Prince Henry's generous impulses prevail. Not one step further," he says. "Friar Angelo, I charge you on your life, heed not what she says, for she is mad." But the fiend is not thus to be baulked of his prey. "Come with me," he cries, and thrusting back the Prince he bars the door. The music is here a true depiction of the situation, and a splendidly worked-up passage for strings hurries us on to the climax. "Why did you not lay hold on her and keep her from destruction, Angelo?" cries the now distracted Prince. "Murderer! Murderer!" shout the chorus. Prince Henry struggles at the door, but cannot move it. "Too late, too late," jeers Lucifer from within. "It shall not be too late" (mark here the effective entry of the brass), and struggling at the door, they burst it open, rescue Elsie, and the scene closes with a sweeping prestissimo from the full orchestra.

In the fifth scene, which is short, the news is brought to Ursula that "when they reached Salerno's gate, the Prince's better self prevailed," and she sings the solo, "Virgin, who lovest the poor and lowly," which is simple yet eloquent, and is cast in strict aria form, having for its accompaniment the strings only.

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In the sixth and last scene we are back again at Vautsberg on the Rhine. Prince Henry and Elsie are on the terrace. It is the eve of their wedding-day, and the bells of Geisenheim are heard in the distance. The composer has responded to the musical illustration called for in a manner which, while intensely realistic, is perfectly legitimate. It is his invariable habit to keep his best things to the last, and he makes no exception here. This scene, which is one long duet between Elsie and her Prince, is the most idyllic, the most supremely lovely of all. I know nothing in music which exactly compares with it. It is tender, simple and perfect, and of a loving delicacy. All sorrow is of the past, and the life that reigns is love. No choicer example of this master's music can be found than this musical relation by the Prince to Elsie of the Legend of Charlemagne.

Particularly beautiful is the sweeping theme of the violins which accompanies the words of Prince Henry, "And the great monarch sat serene and sad beside the fated shore," and in which there occurs the happiest of transitions from the key of D flat through that of A major

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and back again. The climax of the scene is reached at the words—

"In life's delight, in death's dismay
In storm and sunshine, night and day,
In health and sickness, in decay,
Here and hereafter I am thine;"

and for the absolute loveliness of the sound in this portion of the duet I can find no words adequate that would not seem violent. Suffice it that such music once heard is never forgetable.

Of the Epilogue I shall only say that it is a fit ending to what has preceded it. The work as a whole is a masterpiece. And it is because it is a masterpiece (and we have so very, very few) that I claim my reader's indulgence if I have considered it perhaps more closely than is strictly compatible with the length of this sketch. Upon it a commentary might be written longer than this book, and something be left unsaid. But the supreme quality of the music is its gift of life and variety, its extreme pathos, and the depth of its emotion. And these are not qualities which can be expressed by any system of analysis or extraction. Moreover it is a work from which it would be

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impossible to detach any special portion without that portion suffering in the process. An excerpt from it gives no more idea of the whole than does the salt pool left by the receding tide of the ocean. Not since the "Elijah" at Birmingham has any work been accorded a reception such as this "Golden Legend" received at the Leeds Festival of 1886. On its absolute merits it took the audience by storm. The hall was a shower of fluttering handkerchiefs and waving hats; a sustained thunder of approval came from the audience, accentuated by the ringing cheers, "One, two, three, and all together," of the male chorus; the members of the orchestra laid down their instruments to clap their hands; and the chorus ladies pelted the composer with flowers. Thus one critic described it, whilst another reliable witness declares that "the effect it produced at rehearsal was enormous. The effect of the public performance unprecedented. I have never to my remembrance," he says, "found such unanimity of opinion among the public, musicians, and the press." Since then it has gone the round of the world and taken its place side by side with the greatest creations of the century. The Berlin press alone raised up its

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voice against it. But then we know for why. "What has this stranger to do here?" was the general cry both in and out of the theatre. The part of Elsie was given to a singer so utterly incompetent that in justice to himself the composer was obliged to ask Madame Albani, at a moment's notice, if she would come to his aid. She did so, and although the press in no wise retracted their statement, the second performance was so great an improvement on the first that Herr Wolff, the concert agent, said to the composer, "If the first performance had been like that of to-night, I could have sold scores of tickets at fifty marks." But the fact that the Intendant-General of the opera was conspicuously absent from his box, coupled with the inaction of the management—who, if they did not from the commencement place difficulties in the way of the performances, certainly offered no assistance—is sufficient to show the spirit surrounding the production of a serious work from an Englishman in Berlin. It is strange that with such a state of things in Germany we in England should be—by reason of the unreasonable idolatry of a large com munity for German art and German diffuseness —in danger of having the young strength of

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our native art sapped away, and its progress stinted by a Teutonic growth which having once taken root in our soil threatens to ravage and blight all around it. Yet perhaps it is not so strange after all; it may even be thoroughly typical of us.

At both Leeds and Berlin the composer conducted the work himself. The festivals in the former town he has conducted with regularity since 1880, when he produced there his "Martyr of Antioch." From 1874 to 1876 he conducted the Royal Aquarium Company's concerts, from 1875 to 1877 the Glasgow Festivals, and from 1878 to 1879 Messrs. Gatti's Promenade Concerts at Covent Garden. Add to this that from 1884 to 1886 he conducted the concerts of the Philharmonic Society, and it will be said that he has had a goodly experience of this branch of his art. If popularity with the orchestra were the sole criterion, he would without doubt be *the* English conductor *par excellence*, for when Arthur Sullivan calls a rehearsal, be it theatre or concert room, the missing instruments are few indeed. I have noticed in his renderings a refinement and finesse, a delicacy and taste, only too rare in these times. Some people theorise that the chief essentials of a good conductor are

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that he play a variety of instruments, and have a memory like the well nigh proverbial cab-horse. But they forget that many military band-masters are possessed of both these acquirements, and are not necessarily good conductors. Wagner used to say that the whole business of a conductor was to give the right time to his band. But this is a comprehensive definition indeed. True that from one point of view the whole business of a conductor is embraced within it, but it is the acquirement of that very "right time" that is the rub. Musical culture in an extreme degree a good conductor must have, as also must he have the highest sensibility of *nuance*, and more than that, the power of imparting—it matters not how he does it, so long as he does it—what he feels to be the composer's meaning to his band. The mere fact of distinguishing between a *forte* and a *fortissimo*, an *andante* and an *andantino*, an *allegro* and a *prestissimo*, is not sufficient. Now Sullivan is not merely a conductor as *per* Wagner, any more than he is a conductor as *per* Mendelssohn, or as *per* anybody else. In this, as in all else, he is nothing if not himself. His whole aim is to get from his orchestra the rendering of the music as he has it in his mind, and of that

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aim he never stops short. Moreover, there is no coarseness in his band; his 'strings' are never a mere mass of resin, any more than is his 'brass' a reminiscence of Margate pier on a Bank Holiday. He has that natural aptitude for 'coaxing' the tone out of his orchestra which is so rare and so invaluable. He may at times lack breadth in his renderings, but that, at all events, is an error on the right side. Nevertheless, no rendering of the C minor sym phony could be more perfect in any respect than his. Perhaps the whole gist of the matter lies in that he infuses into his band just that selfsame sympathy that he infuses into his music. So long as he does that, it matters little what he may not do.

And now let me say a few words—there is space for no more—concerning his endeavour to cross the *pons asinorum* of English Grand Opera. The circumstances surrounding "Ivanhoe" and its production are of so recent a date as to enable me to dispense with all mention of them. One thing we may safely conclude: that is, that when he decided upon Ivanhoe for his subject, he did so after much mature and deliberate consideration. But that he did wisely no one at all intimate with his genius can

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admit. However versatile a man's genius may be, we are generally able after careful observation and consideration of his works, as well as by their comparison, to arrive at one phase of it, which is greater and more highly developed than the rest. But in the case of Sullivan this is unusually difficult. Pathos, passion, descriptive power, imagination, humour, all these he has in a greater or lesser degree. But upon which can we put our hand and say that it is his greatest power, his most powerful characteristic? I have heard it said that it is in his fund of humour that he has his greatest possession—a misconception arising no doubt from the fact that he has chosen to exercise his humorous faculty to a greater extent than any other, and that it appears the more prominent by reason of its rarity. I have heard it said that he is purely lyrical, that he has no sense of drama, and that he has no power to sustain a great work. To that he has given the lie direct in his "Golden Legend." But altogether apart from technical considerations, where lies the magic of his music? To me it seems that it is in its intense sympathy, its true sincerity of feeling. And if we compare his two chief efforts, we are brought face to face with a disparity which would seem

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to prove it conclusively. In each case we get examples of his genius in all its many sides, yet in the one we have complete, and in the other but partial achievement—the latter the result simply of an incomplete sympathy with his characters. In the "Legend" they stand out one from the other, each in itself a definite conception. In "Ivanhoe" it is not so, and but one assumes any distinct musical personality. He has felt that they are not very human—not very rich in the simple elemental qualities of humanity. Ivanhoe the brave and generous, Rowena the beautiful and amiable—what are they but the traditional hero and heroine of romance? The haughty templars and barons cast nothing around them so much as a chilliness which is well nigh arctic. And Rebecca with her beauty and purity, her firm adherence to her religious faith, is almost too angelic and altogether too immaculate to be believed in, notwithstanding that she was drawn from life. We are told that it is to Scott's friendship with Washington Irving that we owe the existence of her character, that the original from whom she was modelled was one Rebecca Gratz of Philadelphia, in praise of whom the author of "Salmagundi" could never say enough. Yet

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she would seem more than human. The "Templar" alone is truly human and humanly interesting—a living, breathing entity. As to the story itself, what it gains in picturesqueness and dramatic situation it more than loses by the want of unity in its action. In arranging it for the composer, the librettist did all that he could do with it, but at best it resolves itself into a panorama of events, occurring about the same time to a number of persons who happened to be gathered together at Ashby. It was quite palpable to any one who watched (and heard the remarks of) the audiences that assembled nightly at the Royal English Opera House that the greater part of their enjoyment, beyond that of pure musical gratification, was obtained from the beautiful blaze of the Castle of Torquilstone. That was where they considered they received at least seventy-five per cent. of their money's worth. But to say that they were interested in the persons before them as human beings would be incorrect of the majority. And what the audience felt, the composer felt, and because he is true as steel in his art it shows it on the face of it. There is no one of his scores—not even the "Golden Legend," that displays a greater wealth of resource, a more consummate musician-

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ship, and more dramatic power than does his "Ivanhoe." Indeed in the matter of pure musical workmanship it is the most remarkable of all. But the subject was too hard to take the true impression of his style. We have little of that delightfully caressing music with which he can surround a character he loves. He is not the man to write music merely descriptive of and suitable to any given character. It must be the true and heartfelt expression of its innermost being. And this, in my judgment, is what is lacking in "Ivanhoe." He has felt very sorry for Rebecca, one can feel that. He has realised the powerful, unholy passion of the Templar, but for the rest—well, he is the masterly musician. In the pure comedy element he is himself again and rises supreme. But Mr. Sturgis thought wise to dispense with such people as Gurth, Wamba, and the Prior of Jorvaulx, and rely solely for his relief upon the quips of Friar Tuck with King Richard. And the musician had but to make the most of what was given him. From the Friar's song: "The wind blows cold across the moor," he has extracted every morsel of humour that was to be extracted. He strikes his jovial note from the very commencement of this scene, and he throws it up the more

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prominently by contrasting with it on the entrance of the Friar some truly ecclesiastic music for the clarionets and bassoons and 'cellos. He has then reverted to his primary phrase, and developed it as a short "fugato," making this one of the happiest portions of the opera.

That he is entirely successful in all the purely lyrical portions of the work need hardly be insisted upon. Rowena's solo, "O moon, art thou clad?" with its exquisite arpeggio accompaniment for harp, strings, three flutes and clarionets; Ivanhoe's song in the third act, "Happy with winged feet," with its wealth of instrumental detail; Rebecca's "Allegretto pastorale"—all these are such as we looked to receive from their composer. But the fervency and dramatic power displayed in the Templar's solo, "Woo thou thy snowflake," is a revelation. For intensity of feeling he has never achieved more than he does here in the words:

"And I will woo her as the lion woos,
To bring his wild mate docile to his side
And I will win her as the lion wins
That in the desert seeks his tawny bride.'

The syncopated accompaniment of violins and

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violas, with the *cor anglais* and remainder of the wood-wind sustaining the harmony, until at the words, "O maid of Judah, trembling in my arms," they are reinforced by the harp and bass strings, is the most perfect complement of the conception that could be imagined. The music is full of life and passion—the passion that Swinburne speaks of as "the absolute fusion in one fire of sense and spirit." But it is manly and virile, and never nauseates. All these things constitute the excellences of "Ivanhoe." But against them must be put a considerable quantity of music which, to say the least of it, does not seem to bear the impress of having been written *con amore*. One would never be justified in saying of the composer of the "Golden Legend" that he wilfully condescended to indulge in such a process as "doing the big bow-wow," yet so much has he been forced to rely upon his musical artisanship, that in comparison to the spontaneity of such a work as the "Legend" much of the music of "Ivanhoe" seems out of joint. There is in some of it distinctly traceable something of effort, somewhat of weariness, and a general air of impatience, perhaps with the subject, perhaps with himself for not feeling in

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sympathy with it. But there it is. And small wonder, for no such book as this ever inspired a musician of the calibre of Arthur Sullivan. And yet from another point of view it is a very great work; and it is probably more as the work of the composer of "The Golden Legend" than in the abstract that it is disappointing. It is pre-eminently the first of all latter-day attempts at English Grand Opera. It drew crowded houses for months and would, there is no doubt, have done more had it been acted and sung in a manner worthy of it. There never was more of amateurism devoted to the interpretation of any opera than to "Ivanhoe." And the perfect art and lavish expenditure which went to make the setting so beautiful served only to throw up the more this vocal and histrionic inefficiency. The Templar of Mr. Oudin, the Ivanhoe of Mr. Ben Davies, the Rebecca of Miss Macintyre alone stood out as thoroughly artistic impersonations. Mr. François Cellier's orchestra was one of the finest ever heard inside a London theatre, and nothing better than this music could they have had in which to show what they could do. It taxed their strength in each direction, and from out the ordeal they emerged triumphant. But

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even to the unversed in the intricacies of theatrical management, it did indeed seem strange that nothing was put into rehearsal to follow "Ivanhoe" until some time after it had ceased to be a paying performance. And that the opera chosen to follow it should have been a French Opera-comique—even though it was the most beautiful specimen of its class produced since Bizet's "Djamileh"—seemed even more strange. The only thing that—taking all these facts into consideration—did not seem strange, was that the Royal English Opera should cease to exist. And of all who worked for the success of the enterprise—and be it said in justice, they did their best according to their lights—no one did more for it than did Sir Arthur Sullivan. There can be no doubt that the lavish expenditure on dresses and scenery indulged in by the manager in his anxiety to do justice to the work itself, defeated its own ends, and did as much as anything to remove "Ivanhoe" from the bills. Yet in spite of all these things a large amount of success attended the production—and moreover an enormous amount of impetuosity and zeal. Two things were conclusively proven: first that there is a public for serious opera in London, second that the musician who can, and

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no doubt will, succeed in writing a serious English opera that shall endure, is Arthur Sullivan. And to have proved two such facts as these is a tangible result to be placed to the credit of Mr. D'Oyly Carte.

That we shall have—in the not far distant future let us hope—another serious opera from Sir Arthur Sullivan, is more than likely. For the present "Ivanhoe" is pleasant to contemplate and encourages the thought that he will succeed here as he has succeeded elsewhere. As a musician, his versatility is a distinguishing feature of him. He has appealed to his public in many manners, and of each there are results well nigh perfect after their kind. To name his "Onward, Christain Soldiers" (one only out of the many hymn tunes he has written), his Service in D., his Part Song "Hush thee, my baby," is to emphasise his supremacy in these the smaller forms of his art. Nothing is too small for him —nothing too great. He is the most omniverous of musicians. Like his well-beloved Schubert, there is little that he could not set to music. Whether he is at his best in symphony or oratorio, in cantata or opera, will ever remain, for the most part, a matter of taste. Suffice it that his versatility never leads him

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wrong—that we never find him in a musical garb that ill befits him. Next to his versatility as a distinguishing characteristic, is his sympathy. It is none the less contagious because quietly expressed. He makes no show of it. It is not the sympathy of intellectuality alone—it is something more than a mere sense of the fitness of things. His science aids him not a little, for in the mastery of the technique of his art he is the equal of any of his *confrères*. But he keeps it in its place, and his heart is ever human. By him the narrow line which divides true sentiment from sickly sentimentality is never crossed. Over the actions of the man and the musician one guiding power, one priceless possession, holds its sway—it is his sound common-sense. His store of it is as large as most men's—larger than most musician's. His musical tastes are catholic in the extreme—and I know but one composer whose work is entirely uncongenial to him. His good nature and his charity are well known, though those to whom they are best known are the recipients of them. Be he appealed to by a quondam acquaintance "down in his luck," or a fellow artist in distress, and there will be some strong reason for it if he be sent away with nothing but advice. Amongst

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"those who go down to the West in broughams," he is as well-beloved as he is amongst his purely professional colleagues. He has "witched the world" with his music, and his friends with his geniality. He bears out more strongly than any artist of my acquaintance Mr. R. L. Stevenson's theory, that "extreme *busyness* is a symptom of deficient vitality; and a faculty for idleness implies a catholic appetite and a strong sense of personal identity." When he is not working he idles intelligently, and there is little going on around him to which he is not alive. "Many," goes on Mr. Stevenson, "who have plied their book diligently, and know all about some one branch or another of accepted lore, come out of the study with an ancient and owl-like demeanour, and prove dry, stockish, and dyspeptic in all the better and brighter parts of life." Not so Arthur Sullivan. When his work is done, he puts it behind him, and whether he bestow his attention on his game of billiards—which he dearly loves—or even on his parrots—no less well beloved—it is his whole attention. Brilliant as is the sunshine of his success, it doubtless has not been without its clouds—some fleecy, some lowering and dark. But the darkest of them all, the disease which has so relentlessly

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pursued him, is for the time being at bay. So long as that is so, we may look for many another hundred bars of the music he has taught us all to love so well. By the waters of the Mediterranean—those very waters whereon in days gone by gazed Elsie and her Prince—I left him three months since, surrounded by all that is loveliest in nature and by all the good gifts of this world. Once more was he about to unite to the inimitable drollery of Mr. Gilbert the no less inimitable strains of his own sprightly muse. May be the world is even now the richer by one more such work as "The Mikado." In the hope that it is so, let us leave him.

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ALEXANDER CAMPBELL MACKENZIE

ALEXANDER CAMPBELL MACKENZIE is the only great Scotch musician. With the exception of his music, one is justified in saying that if every bar ever written by a Scotchman were destroyed to-morrow the loss to art would be trivial.

That this should be so seems the more strange when we contemplate the splendid activity of the Scotch in the sister art of literature. In the sphere of imaginative prose, had their contribution been that of Sir Walter alone it would have been great. To-day it is in men such as Robert Louis Stevenson, William Black, and James Barrie that we find the leaders of our fiction. In poetry we are indebted to them for Campbell and Burns, while in criticism could there be two names more mighty than those of Macaulay and Carlyle? The fact then that up to his advent Scotland has had no composer of the first rank is in itself sufficient

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to constitute Mackenzie a figure of more than usual interest. Hitherto they had not even had the ambition to hope for musical distinction. Now this is not so. Fired by his illustrious example, several of his younger countrymen are endeavouring to follow in his footsteps. In coming after him, they have both advantage and disadvantage. Advantage, because their nation is at length awakened from its lethargy and is prepared to encourage them, seeing through them the possibility—nay, even the probability—of being able to hold itself up amongst other musical nations and to point with pride to its contribution to the world's music. Disadvantage, oecause they will of necessity be compared to one whom it will be hard to equal—doubly hard to beat. It will be interesting to see whether among these young aspirants for fame and distinction there is one who possesses sufficient of the genius, the application, and the indomitable perseverance, to place him in a position similar to that which by virtue of those qualities Dr. Mackenzie has attained. It will not be sufficient for them to receive the applause of their fellow countrymen; they will have, by sheer force of talent, to overcome those extensive prejudices which we know exist against British

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musicians in general, and by it alone to extract from our Continental cousins the admission of true worth—in a word, the recognition which has been accorded to their leader.

The man who represents the fourth generation of artists in one family bears no light burden. Its responsibility will of course be in proportion to the greatness of his predecessors. In the case of Mackenzie, music, although represented by the three generations preceding him, only became a prominent characteristic of the family in the person of his father—Alexander Mackenzie. In James Dibdin's "Annals of the Edinburgh Stage," there is frequent mention of him. One paragraph having special reference to him I shall quote.

"It is worth noting that Alexander Mackenzie, who had been several years deputy leader of the orchestra, now succeeded his old friend and master, James Dewar, as chief. Mackenzie not only kept the orchestra up to its old standard, but even brought it to exceed its former efficiency. He was himself an admirable executant on the violin, and a first-rate musician, which qualifications, united to great energy, sound common-sense, and great attraction of person and manner, could not fail in making a mark on the musical

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department of the theatre. For its size, the Edinburgh orchestra may be said to have been the first in the kingdom, and it made successful annual visits to London. Mackenzie's early death in 1857 (October 7th) was to be deeply regretted. In his son, Dr. A. C. Mackenzie, however, he left a legacy to music that his country can never be too proud of."

His son, the subject of this sketch, was born in Edinburgh, just ten years before his father's death—that is, in 1847. To the name Alexander that of Campbell was added, as representative of his mother's family. He is pure Highland on both sides—as much a Celt as Bach and Handel were Teutons. If then we assume a racial influence to be pre-eminently important, his music should be beyond all else—Scottish. If, on the other hand, we assume the surrounding physical conditions of climate, etc. to be equally influential, we shall have an interesting struggle for supremacy, for much of his intellectual life has been passed in the South. Outside either of these conditions there is the isolated one of denationalisation. It is possible for a musician, be he French, English, or German, to succumb to the influences of his training or his cultivated tastes, and lay himself out to vie with the

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musicians of a foreign country in writing their music. Of this there is no lack of illustrative example even in this country.

Yet this is an age of the revival of national feeling, and we English enter heartily into the movement. Our greatest desire is to feel that our English school of music is growing up steadily and strongly around us. We welcome each new comer as an additional pillar of strength, we foster his talent, and spend no lack of industry in instructing him in the right paths of his art. All this we do, and it is well that we do it. Then we calmly proceed to undo what we have so carefully brought about. We send our young man to Germany, there to become imbued with Germanisms which we hope will aid him in the production of English music. I think it is our innate modesty which is in part to blame. Is it not one of our most charming characteristics, this modesty? How truly spake the inimitable Gilbert when he 'put upon the list' 'the idiot who praises with enthusiastic tone every century but this and every country but his own.' Yet I suppose it is to custom and tradition that we are mainly indebted for this strange procedure in our system of musical education. Our emancipation from it must then

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be gradual. Perhaps it will have to be obtained by offering—as Hamerton has suggested in analogous cases—a substitute at first very slightly different from that we have been long used to. "If the English," he says, "had been in the habit of tatooing, the best way to procure its abolition would have been to admit that it was quite necessary to cover the face with elaborate patterns, yet gently to suggest that these patterns would be still more elegant if delicately painted in water-colours. Then you might have gone on arguing—still admitting, of course, the absolute necessity for ornament of some kind—that good taste demanded only a moderate amount of it; and so you would have brought people gradually to a little flourish on the nose or forehead when the most advanced reformers might have set the example of dispensing with ornament altogether." I am inclined to think that our liberation from the trammels of this tradition has already commenced. It was thought necessary that our last young man should imbibe from France as well as from Germany. Let us hope that in France we find our "water-colours," and that the day of deliverance is not far off.

Seeing that nothing of any moment happened

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to our artist in the very early period of his existence, I purpose taking up the thread of his young life at the age of ten years, at which time he also came under the sway of the mighty Teuton.

It came about in this way. In the course of one of its many tours in Europe, Johann Gungl's famous band visited Edinburgh. A prominent member of it named Bartel, a native of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, recognising in the Scotch capital a wide field for the practice of his profession, severed his connection with it, and remained in Edinburgh. He eventually became a member of the local orchestra under Mackenzie. Up to this time Mackenzie Senior had come to no definite decision regarding his son's future. The artistic tendencies evinced by the boy were unmistakable, but whether to decide in favour of the painter's art or that of the musician, was a matter that considerably perplexed him. He had placed him for general education at Hunter's School. Here he had done neither more nor less than any other boy. But the father's experience told him that if his son were to seriously embrace one of the arts as a profession, there was no time to be lost in placing him on the right road. He fell back

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on the advice of his friends. His house had become the rendezvous of all the famous musicians and artists who chanced to be in Edinburgh. Amongst these—because they were intimates of his—we may mention George Hausmann, uncle of the present Robert Hausmann, violoncellist and the pupil of Piatti, and Johann Durrner, a composer somewhat celebrated for his male-voice compositions. This latter musician became at Mackenzie's request sole guardian of the boy, and it was he who practically decided his future. This much having been agreed upon, there came the question of where he should be sent to study. The opportunities in Scotland were none of the best. Tradition demanded Germany, the friends whose advice he sought were Germans, therefore Germany it must be. That much was certain. For the rest Bartel now came to the rescue, and decided in favour of his native Schwarzburg-Sondershausen. The arguments which he put forward in its favour were sound. Firstly it was inexpensive—a strong recommendation to a man wholly dependent upon his professional earnings—and secondly, although quite a small community it was one of the most advanced musical centres in Germany. That it was so

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is not difficult to understand. From Sondershausen to Weimar is but three hours' ride. In the time of Goethe and Schiller, Weimar was the focus from which flashed a literary light so strong as to illumine the whole of Germany. This was no longer so, but the air which had been so charged by them, although somewhat freed, was still suggestive. Their influence was there. Berlioz felt it later. "Weimar at last," he says. "Good! Here I can breathe. There is something in the air that tells me this is an artistic town. Its aspect corresponds exactly to my preconceived idea—tranquil, bright, airy, and peacefully dreamy, with charming surroundings, beautiful streams, shady hills and smiling valleys."

All that was wanted to revive that great intellectual activity of the past was a man possessed of that energy, enthusiasm, and personal fascination which are such essential qualities in a leader. Such a man came in Franz Liszt. From the commencement of the forties, Liszt closely allied himself with Weimar, and in 1849 he settled down there for a period of twelve years. He became the advocate of the rising musical generation. Under him the Weimar Court Theatre became famous. The energy of the

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man was prodigious, and this hamlet bade fair once more to become the artistic centre of Germany. Those musicians whom we now connect with what we term "The School of the Future," there gathered together and discussed their plans and theories. In a word Weimar became the 'hub' of the musical universe. The little town of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen was in its own way no less active and ambitious. In addition to the fact of its propinquity to the larger centre, the director of the local orchestra was Edouard Stein, a musician of broad views, and a personal friend of both Wagner and Liszt. This, then, was the place to which our young Scotsman was brought by his father at ten years of age. Little did the poor boy think that when he said farewell to him, it was for the last time. He died two days after his return to Edinburgh, parted from his child, yet thankful he had been allowed by Providence to perform this last act.

Life did not seem to hold much gladness for the boy in this strange land, where there was but one person who spoke his native language, and where he had no sooner arrived than he received the news that his poor father was lying dead in his home. But these simple people were kind to him. He had been placed as a

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private pupil in the house of the Stadtmusiker or Stadtpfeiffer—a dignitary whose equivalent we have not in this country. It was formerly the custom that to him should be apprenticed so many young men, who were to study with him and provide any music that might be required on public occasions. The terribly accomplished person to whom I have referred as speaking English, was the Professor at the High School. He had been a pupil of Spohr, and was a creditable violinist, and I believe his English was nothing if not Shakespearean. From him our young musician received lessons in German; whilst under Bartel he soon made sufficient progress in violin playing to enable him to take his part in the Ducal Orchestra. This much achieved, he commenced the study of musical theory with Stein, and continued that of the violin with Ulrich, who had been formerly with Ferdinand David at the first desk at the Gewandhaus Concerts.

He now began to form acquaintance with the masterpieces of modern music. His opportunities of playing the works of Wagner, Berlioz (for Berlioz was a great favourite in those parts) and Liszt were frequent. The reputation of those concerts was steadily growing, and musicians frequently came from other centres of

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Germany to hear them; Liszt, especially, was a constant visitor, and Mackenzie's acquaintance with him dates from this time. Some years later the post of Kapellmeister at Sondershausen was held by no less a musician than Max Bruch. The experience which Mackenzie gained there, playing as he did, in both concert and theatre, is not to be valued lightly, for apart from the stimulus which it gave him for orchestral composition, he had the great advantage of being able to hear his youthful efforts played by the band. A Festival March which he composed was several times performed, and much liked by the musicians themselves, who thought highly of the talents of this young "Engländer" as they called him.

After having spent some years in this atmosphere it was thought best that he should return and continue his violin study under Sainton, who had been his father's master. In 1861 then he returned to Edinburgh, no longer a young Scot, but a pure German, at all events as regards his speech, for on arriving at Leith in the Hamburg steamer, he found himself positively unable to ask for a cab. At his age this is quite understandable. It was well he left when he did.

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Prosper Sainton was quite a striking figure of his time. His wide experience both as a teacher and instrumentalist, his knowledge of the world in general and of the musical world in particular, his position as a professor at the Royal Academy, were—apart from the association with his father in the days gone by—quite sufficient to cause the young artist to seek in him his adviser. He lost no time about it, and came to London to call upon his professor. Sainton received him kindly, as was his wont, and after looking at some of his work—the Festival March and three pieces for violin and piano—and hearing him play, advised him to enter for the King's Scholarship at the Royal Academy, which would in a few months be vacant. If he were successful—he considered he had an excellent chance of being so—he would then receive him into his violin class. This was all very well, and no doubt sound advice, but like much other advice which carries that estimable quality, it had its inconvenient side. The boy had to live, and granted that in a few months time he might win a scholarship which would provide for his tuition for three years, he was as far off as ever from earning his livelihood. There was only one thing for it:

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he must resort to orchestral playing. After many disappointments he succeeded in finding a vacant place for a "violin" in Mr. R——'s band. This sufficed him for the time, and he diligently prepared himself for the scholarship. In 1834 Willaim IV. had directed that a quarter of the proceeds of a Musical Festival, held in Westminster Abbey, at which the first performance of "Israel in Egypt" produced £9,000, should be handed over to the Royal Academy. This sum of £2,250 was devoted by the Committee to the foundation of four King's Scholarships to be competed for by two male and two female students annually. The other three quarters of the surplus were by Royal command divided between the Royal Society of Musicians, the Choral Fund, and the Musical Fund. Some years later this fund being merged in the general property of the Academy, the scholarship had to be discontinued. It was this prize which our young musician set himself to win. And he won it, but not without a narrow escape of losing his engagement in R——'s orchestra. In order to attend the competition, he had been obliged to absent himself from rehearsal. On his return the same day the decision had been come to, he was

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A. C. MACKENZIE
King's Scholar, 1862

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forthwith called to task by the conductor for this breach. In vain did he protest that his reason was a weighty one, and all important to his future. R—— bade him begone and take his fiddle with him. The boy picked up his instrument and prepared to go, relieving himself of a final shaft: "Well, I don't care. I've won the Scholarship." "Oh, you have, have you?" said R——. "Well, perhaps under those circumstances I will overlook it. You may stay."

He now entered the Academy and settled down to serious study for a period of three years. Sainton, true to his promise, received him in his class, while his studies in harmony and counterpoint were made under Charles Lucas, his master for pianoforte being F. Bowen Jewson. On the retirement of Potter in 1859, Charles Lucas was appointed Principal of the Academy, and held the post up till 1866. The late Sir George Macfarren describes him as a man who had a most remarkable fitness for the office. He had, he says, an almost boundless memory. Moreover, his long-sightedness was such that he could sit almost at one end of the room and overlook the copy from which some pupil was playing at the other. He had such facility on

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all kinds of instruments that in examining students he could tell, whether it were on the violin or violoncello, or on a wind instrument, or on the pianoforte, how the passages were to be played. Imbued as he was with what Lucas would call "revolutionary tendencies" in music, the new scholar was apt frequently to startle his master, who was a staunch conservative in his art, and possessed of what one may fitly term a thoroughly contrapuntal and polyphonic mind. Now it is in such a case as this that the contrapuntal and polyphonic mind is of enormous value, and Charles Lucas was of the greatest value to his young pupil. Tendencies which, if allowed full sway would lead to ruin, were brought under the ban of gentle discipline, nurtured and cultivated until they became excellences. Attempts to astonish, to do something odd, in short, the pursuit of the "striking" at the expense of harmony, sanity, or beauty—done with every good intention—were gently rebuked and guarded against. The experience of mature years was brought to bear on the hot-headedness and impulsiveness of youth, the scientific on the inspirational. The order of intelligence which enables a man to become a great musical scholar is something more than different in

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degree from that which enables him to become a great musician. That the former is intrinsically inferior to the latter cannot be doubted. Yet the musician cannot be wholly independent of the scholar. If the capacity for taking infinite pains really constitutes a "genius," some of our musical scholars are geniuses of a very high order. But it seems to me to be something more than this, something more than either learning, industry, or even facility. Naturally this brings us to the oft asked question, "What is genius?" We argue and stickle for a clear definition of it in the abstract, but in the concrete we have no difficulty in putting our finger upon a work which has its imprint. It is unmistakable.

In this instance we have a prominent example of the good effect which the musical scholar may have upon the truly creative musician; the result is admirable. But this is not always the case. The scholar may be, and frequently is, dogmatic, narrow-minded, prejudiced. He can then be of no use to any one, and will probably exist solely to make himself a nuisance to all around him. Lucas, though conservative, was not narrow-minded. He recognised the excellences and the originality in his pupil, his

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pure talent—a gift straight from the gods; and instead of masquerading dulness as profundity, obscurity as subtlety of thought—in a word, obtruding his scholarship—he was content to place it at the boy's disposal, to guide him, and help him, and fructify tenfold the beauty of his thoughts.

He continued working steadily by day and playing in the orchestras of various theatres—chiefly those under Boucicault's management—by night. Of actual and complete composition he achieved nothing. His only relaxation he found in reading. From his earliest childhood his books had been his friends. At ten years of age—just before he went to Germany—he had made himself the terror of the librarian at the Edinburgh Subscription Library. Fielding, Smollett, Scott—nothing came amiss to him. Sainte Beuve has said "there is a class of minds specially characterised by their delicacy, who feel that their idea is superior to their execution, their intelligence greater than their talent, even when the talent is very real; they are easily dissatisfied with themselves, disdain easily won praises, and would rather judge, taste, and abstain from producing, than remain below their conception and themselves. Or if they write, it is by frag-

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ments for themselves only, at long intervals, and at rare moments. Their fecundity is internal and known to few."

These remarks are, I think, especially applicable to Mackenzie, at all events as regards the early part of his career, for in comparison to his fellow workers, he produced little or nothing. The musical genius was in his case more than usually dependent upon his culture. His ideas never were characterised by simplicity; consequently, although his moments of inspiration may have been, and no doubt were, frequent, he probably felt that his command of expressive means was not sufficient to enable him to realise their adequate expression. He was in no hurry to write, and although he looked forward to the time when actual achievement would be his, the interest which he took in acquiring the means to it was all absorbing. Above all, he never prostituted his talent. He felt his gift too sacred to be desecrated for ignoble purposes, and to silence his talent was to him more tolerable than to hackney it. The temptations were, in his case, often difficult to resist, particularly in after years, but he has remained firm and guarded jealously his artistic reputation. The stern necessities of this life required him to play

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quantities of inferior music, and he bowed to the inevitable and did it. But by so doing he saved himself from the (to him) more awful calamity of being obliged to write for his living. Had he resorted to such a course, it would have been doubly disastrous, inasmuch as, apart from all artistic considerations, I do not think he could possibly have been successful. The creation of popular music may seem degrading to the mind of the serious musician, but it is none the less for that a talent, and I venture to think that it was not in the possession of this young artist.

After three years thus spent, he was advised to return to Edinburgh to take up his late father's connection as a violinist and a teacher. At first he became leader of the Choral Union concerts in Glasgow and Edinburgh, but eventually settled down in the latter city as a teacher of violin and pianoforte.

He now entered upon the most arduous period of his life. His pupils increased gradually, and his work assumed such proportions that for eleven hours of every day he was teaching. However brilliant a man's ability, however brave and persistent his industry, it is impossible for him to continue teaching to this extent without seriously impairing his mind and

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his body. His only relief from it was obtained on such occasions as when he played at concerts, or in Chappell's Quartet party or some musical gathering. He was elected conductor of the music of St. George's Church, and conductor of the Scottish Vocal Society, a post which he held for ten years. Amongst the large institutions at which he taught was the Church of Scotland Normal College. Here he introduced the system of teaching simultaneously eight pianoforte pupils, a method which, for large establishments where the smallest fees are charged, he has found productive of the greatest results. The late John Hullah evidently shared his opinions, for the blue books of those years invariably contain complimentary allusions to Mackenzie's results in this direction. Under the title of the Edinburgh Classical Chamber Concerts, a series of six yearly concerts were given at which he was leading violin, and at which were produced three early compositions from his pen—a Pianoforte Trio, a String Quartet, and a Pianoforte Quartet. The latter work I regard as the foundation of his success as a composer. It is his Opus 11, is in the key of E flat, and while constructed on more or less orthodox lines, contains emphatic evidence of "advanced"

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tendencies on the part of its composer. It was first performed at the Monday Popular Concerts in London in '81, when it was accorded a very warm reception. Since then it has repeatedly found its way into our concert programmes.

While the proof-sheets of the Quartet were lying at the publisher's (Kahnt of Leipsic), Von Bülow chanced to notice them. He was decidedly taken with the work, but thought no more about it for the moment. Shortly afterwards the great conductor came to Edinburgh. On his arrival he enquired who were the chief musicians resident in the city; and Mackenzie's name was mentioned to him. "Mackenzie!" he said. "Is that the man whose pianoforte quartet I saw at Kahnt's?" On being assured that it was, Bülow immediately despatched a note to the young musician asking him to come and see him. He did so, and the quartet was produced by Von Bülow on his return to Munich. Its reception in Germany was no less favourable than it had been in England.

In the following year Von Bülow again visited Scotland, being engaged to conduct the Glasgow Choral Union Concerts. He was again a friend to Mackenzie. No man is a prophet in his own country, and the Scotch people (although, to give

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them their due, they know good music when they hear it) could not be persuaded that it was possible for one of their fellow townsmen to be a composer. At the Glasgow Choral Union there is of course nothing but good music (or 'classical' as they prefer to call it) given. Mackenzie had written an overture "Cervantes" (still in MS.), for which he was anxious to obtain a hearing, and approached the Committee of the Society on the matter. No! they would have none of it. Why should they, when they were at liberty to pick and choose from the masterpieces of foreign music? Besides, how could they ask a great conductor like Von Bülow (and one who was so expensive) to conduct a work by a Scotsman? The thing was absurd. Von Bülow, however, did not think so, for he stipulated before the season commenced that amongst the new works he produced should be an overture entitled "Cervantes," written by their fellow townsman and musician, A. C. Mackenzie, of whose talent he held a very high opinion. It was performed, and with much success.

It is wonderful to me how in the intervals snatched from his daily toil his wearied brain and body were sufficiently at his command to enable

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him to compose. It is in these years of drudgery and hope deferred—years to which he looks back with no kindly recollection—that his indomitable perseverance is thrown up with prominent relief. For a man with ambitions there could be no life more antipathetic. There is in all retrospect a certain amount of pathos, but in the life of this musician it unduly predominates. Those who could have helped him would not—those who would could not. It was a stern chase and a long one. Think of the hours, the days, the years which might have been devoted to creative work, flung away, comparatively speaking, in endeavouring to cram into the heads of young Scotsmen the rudiments of his art. Any good scholar would have done for that. Yet here was a creative musician, in the fine flower of his manhood, struggling to make sufficient to enable him to devote himself to his art, while of those around him, whose pleasure and whose pride it should have been to assist him, not one would lend a helping hand. But the picture is an old one. It has been many times repeated, and will be many more. It differs only according to the strength of the individual. Here we have a man of iron will, a man who turns neither to the right nor to the left, but who goes steadily on

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until the goal is reached, and most important of all, a man who had the physique to bear it out. Many have had the spirit, but the flesh has been weak. Poor Bizet, for example. Is there any musician of whom the French are more proud to-day? And is there any man who was more mercilessly hurried to an early grave than the composer of "L'Arlesienne"?

And so he worked on. A "Scherzo" in extended form for orchestra was his next effort. It was the first work of his performed at the Crystal Palace. Then came the first Scotch Rhapsody. It was written at the suggestion of August Manns. While rhapsodical, in Liszt's definition of the term, it is more analogous to Dvořak's "Slavische Rhapsodien" than to those of the Hungarian pianist. Its aim and plan are similar. Liszt would have termed it a 'Scotch Epic.' In speaking of one of Dvořak's contributions in this form, Mr. C. A Barry has summed up its aim thus:—"A work of this kind may be briefly described as consisting of a series of movements, or rather change of *tempo*, fused into one single and continuous movement, the leading motive or motives of the first, by a process of metamorphosis being made to do duty as primary or secondary motives of

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the other, in company with more or less matter of an incidental and independent character introduced transitionally."

Notwithstanding the title, it ought to be said that the melodies are invariably "national." That being so, we are justified in assuming that the harmonic treatment shall also have national characteristics, that is, if we admit the "Rhapsody" as a legitimate art form. In the case of this Scotch Rhapsody, the melodies are essentially charateristic of the old Scotch music, and the first movement is harmonically so. But in the Adagio, although the national flavour is still distinct as regards the melodic material and its rhythmical treatment, it is hardly so harmonically. So altogether beautiful is it in this respect that its very Scotchness is what we resent. Here we have the old Scotch melody on a structure replete with all modern harmonic resource. The mixture is hardly palatable—the fusion savours of anachronism. If in the end we arrived at something definite, well and good. But we do not. Materials so antithetical had been surely better apart.

Mr. Barry also hazards an opinion that modern composers have found the form of the Rhapsody as fascinating as did Mendelssohn that of the

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"Variation." If this be so it may account for Mackenzie's indulgence in it, on the other hand it may not. At all events, by so doing, he gratified the expectations of many, and identified himself with his native music in a manner which was looked for in a composer bearing the name of Alexander Campbell Mackenzie. Having once so identified himself, were he to write a "Seguidilla," there would be many in his audience who would term it "delightfully Scotch," and animadvert upon its "truly Northern colour." But then that is the penalty of identification. He had now tasted blood, and the thirst for more was upon him. With it came a chafing against the work which he was doing. But how to remedy it? There was only one way. Increase it. You will say impossible—that no man could keep up under such an excess of toil. And you will say rightly, for the candle which is thus burned at both ends will not last long. Nevertheless, come what might, he determined to work without ceasing until he had made sufficient money to enable him to leave the city of his birth, the city of his drudgery, for one more in keeping with the feelings which were now only commencing to exert their influence. While he had lacked the strong desire to create, he had

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been willing to go on; now that it had taken possession of him, he had but one object in view. To a man of his temperament resolve is synonymous with accomplishment. For that the cost is none the less, and as the one is sure to come so is the other. His case proved no exception. Completely worn out in mind and body, cessation from all work was forced upon him. Fortune had been kind enough to make it practicable. He had been enabled to put by sufficient to procure him this much needed rest. Then came medical advice and its numerous suggestions, a sea-voyage to Australia among them. One and all he rejected. He felt the mental cure to be equally necessary with the physical. He had always longed to see Italy, and he felt that the gratification of his longing would do much to help him. And so he went to Florence. To those who think they see in him the typical Scot, his choice may seem strange. In the two nationalities there is nothing in common. Yet a man may be drawn towards a foreign nationality solely by his appreciation of its excellence in the arts that he loves. Or if a love of travel be his ghost and he have not laid it, he may acquire tastes of which, previous to his travel, he gave no sign. We have noted in the boy strong artistic ten-

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dencies both as regards music and painting. They had duly increased and developed in the man. The master minds of Florence were no sealed book to him. He had read of them and dreamed of them, and he longed to visit their home, to know their life. He felt that there he would find the calm security which can only be apart from the feverish turmoil of ordinary existence. It was so. The contemplation of the beauties of Michael Angelo and Cellini, the mysteries of Dante and Alfieri, the grandeur of the Palazzo Vecchio, the grace of the Casa Ricasoli, were all-absorbing. Those lovely walks to Fiesole and Bellosguardo, where from the heights one views the fair city as from no other place—now along the old Certosa Road to the ancient monastery, now a saunter in the gardens of Boboli, no matter where, there were the bright faces of the Tuscan "contadine," and a greeting to be exchanged with them in their own mellifluous tongue. Each of these things was full of enjoyment for him. They gave ample play to thought and fancy. In such an atmosphere alone did he feel it possible to idle and to bear no blame. For six months he put no pen to paper. At the end of that time the quiet rest had had its effect. He

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felt refreshed and mentally invigorated, and once more set to work. His "piano" was on the Lung'Arno (Nuovo). Here it was that he wrote "The Bride" and "Jason," the two first works which heralded a period of five years ceaseless activity.

The early acquaintance with Franz Liszt, which had been formed at Sondershausen, was now renewed. At the house of Carl Hillebrand they met frequently. It was a house where artists, poets, and musicians were wont to gather—one of the social centres of Florence. And here the acquaintance between these two was brought dangerously near to an abrupt termination. The circumstances were in themselves trivial. They are certainly not worth relating. Suffice it to say that it was merely a misunderstanding in which the Abbé proved to be in fault, and for which he duly made amends. Those who know what his nature was, know that one of his most prominent characteristics was an uncommon one. He was a man with a sensitive conscience. He was also a man with a temper, and in no small degree a spoiled child of fortune. But he was a man who, if he were once convinced of his fault, would never cease to regret it, and who

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lost no opportunity of showing his regret. This was one of Liszt's distinctly good points. In this case it is conspicuous. His interest in Mackenzie was doubled from that day. He had previously taken no personal interest in the work of our young friend—now it was "Where is that Scotchman?" "I want to know something of his music." In vain was all dissuasion. The young musician was obliged there and then to go and fetch his Scotch Rhapsodies. He brought the arrangements for four hands. No sooner did Liszt handle them than he sat down to the piano, and with his pupil, Sophie Menter, played them through. The next morning the Abbé left for Pesth with the scores in his pocket, fully determined in his own mind that they should there be played by the Philharmonic Society.

As a matter of fact his determination was never realised. Why, we do not know. But the fact of his expressed desire being thus lightly treated, sufficed to keep him away from that city for several years. Where Liszt could not be omnipotent there should be no Liszt. Thus he thought, and thus he acted.

I have alluded to "The Bride" and "Jason." The former was written for the Worcester, the latter for the Bristol, Festival. Both works fore-

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cast in no small degree the future of their composer. Of the first named work the libretto, adapted from the German, was vague in the extreme, and for that reason alone, it is to the credit of the composer that the music is highly interesting. That is the word which I think best describes it; but in "Jason" we get much further. We arrive at the characteristic tendencies of the composer. There is more of freedom, and much more of the descriptive element. His eclecticism is manifest. Old forms and new are found side by side, and reminiscences of Mendelssohn are followed by expressions of sympathy with the Bayreuth master. I am inclined to think that the latter predominate. Taking into consideration the atmosphere in which it was written, it leaves one, as regards the "love music," singularly cold. It lacks both directness of expression and intensity of feeling. As it happens, the chief demands made by the story are those with which the composer is best able to comply. His power of writing descriptive music was then, and is now, his greatest power. The opening scene, which describes the building of the ship, is both graphic and picturesque; its contrasts are striking, and its handling powerful. It alone would have been

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sufficient to stamp its author as highly creative in this direction. But it cannot be said that in those episodes of the story which for their requisite expression make demands upon the emotional element, he has been equally successful. Achievement in that direction was, at this period at all events, a matter of futurity. He was evidently conscious of his shortcomings and he was determined that there should be no lack of endeavour on his part to overcome them.

Fortune now favoured him by putting in his way a direct 'call to arms,' in the shape of an offer from Carl Rosa to write a Grand Opera for his company. He accepted it, and duly underwent that period of indecision and anxiety which to the conscientious musician usually follows—how to find a subject with which he should be in sympathy, and which, moreover should be sympathetic to the public. Idea after idea, and period after period, were rejected. Unable to come to a decision, he sought the advice of his friend Francis Hueffer, then musical critic to the *Times*. This gentleman had previously written for operatic treatment a version of Prosper Merrimé's "Colomba." It had been submitted to, accepted, and ultimately rejected

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by Mr. Arthur Goring Thomas — whether on account of the subject or its treatment I know not, but one would imagine him to have been entirely in sympathy with the story. This book Mr. Hueffer now sent to Mackenzie, who accepted it.

He lost no time in setting to work upon it, and to enable him to obtain even greater freedom and quietude, he rented an old "castello," which in the course of one of his many wanderings around Florence he had spied. This was at Borgo-alla-Collina, a village in Casentino, some thirty miles from the city. It was typically Italian, and being on the high road, not too difficult of access. Once settled down here, he devoted his whole thought to the opera. That he had undertaken no light task he knew full well. He had no English precedent to go upon. It was necessary that he should strike out quite independently of all that had gone before, if his work were to be taken as an English lyrical drama representative of its time. The opposition at first encountered in this country by the works of Richard Wagner, had to some extent been lived down; and the capacity of the public to receive new theories and ideas had therefore been, in some degree, proven. But to what extent? That was the

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BORGO-ALLA-COLLINA IN CASENTINO

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delicate point. As for himself, he was greatly in sympathy with the Bayreuth master. He determined that "Colomba" should be essentially modern. He would revive none of the traditions of English Opera. The task would be a great one, but he did not flinch before it.

This story of morbid personal pride, of passion for blood and revenge, interested him as a story, and he studied it until he deemed his work of assimilation to be complete. As Mr. Pater (in an admirable article on its author) has pointed out, the interest of the book is that it allows us to watch the action of this malignant power on Colomba's brother, Orso della Rabbia, as it discovers, rouses, concentrates to the leaping point, in the somewhat weakly diffused nature of the youth, the dormant elements of a dark humour akin to her own. From the first, Colomba, with "voice soft and musical," is at his side, gathering every accident and echo and circumstance—the very slightest circumstance—into the chain of necessity which draws him to the action everyone at home expects of him as the head of his race. It is a fierce story, and an engrossing and captivating story. Its psychical interest is without doubt equal with its dramatic. Moreover, it is eminently national,

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which in its case is synonymous of sombre. The taciturn and sullen nature of the Corsican is over it all. This, I take it, was the point for the musician to grasp, equally with the musical expression of the outward scenes and actions of the story. Its detail of bodily life and terrene circumstance should have been of secondary consideration to the composer. Bizet realised this in "Carmen," and therein lies the grandeur of his achievement. The waywardness and the frailty of his heroine were ever with him, and even in some of the brightest and lightest portions of his score there are still the subtle indications of impending doom. He is boisterous at times, he is also weak, but he is very human. His robustiousness offends not, and his very weaknesses are lovable. In a word, he has surrounded his work with an 'atmosphere' in which it thrives and palpitates. Now, do we get this in Colomba? Yes and no.

If we ask for local colour, you may say we have the "Vocero," and we have the "Corsican Love Song." These were to be expected. Would Carmen be Carmen to the multitude without its Habanera? Has there not been more discussion as to whether it was or was not an original melodic creation of the composer, than

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was ever vouchsafed to the real beauties of his work? Poor Bizet! This was a very sore point to him. And small wonder. It was nothing to him that wise and almighty critics came forth with the gigantic discovery that this Habanera consisted merely of a chromatic scale constructed first on the basis of D minor and afterwards on that of D major. His Carmen is set with many gems. It was not even one of the more conspicuous among them.

And this *vocero* which we have in "Colomba." What is it? The Emerald Islander should recognise in it much that he is familiar with in his Irish 'wake.' The *Altidos* of Sardinia, the *Voceri* of Corsica, the *Diesilli* of Sicily, the *Triboli* of Southern Italy are one and the same thing—simply prayers and laments over the dead, with—in the first-named countries—an additional element of "vendetta" thrown in.

All this we have musically expressed. In the Prelude itself are the four leading themes of the Opera: (1) the Vendetta, or Revenge motive; (2) the "Vocero," or lament; (3) the "love" motive; and (4) the Prayer which in the closing scene is sung over Colomba's dead body. This prelude is a beautiful piece of workmanship. Its themes are distinctive—they are admirably

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contrasted. The same applies throughout the work. But the subtlety, the repressed fatality, does not seem to have been fully grasped by the composer; if so, he has failed to adequately realise its musical expression. On the other hand, its detail, in some respects its design and its graphic power, are not to be surpassed. It is, before all, music to be studied—to be admired. To love it would be to subject it to an indignity. It permits of no undue familiarity. There is in it no trace of weakness. In the fourth act alone does it really satisfy us. This act with its element of tragedy, which is absent from Prosper Merrimé's romance, was written in five days. (That makes me to wish the whole opera had been written in twenty.) Here its ring is very true—its feeling really deep. He has unbent for the nonce, and stepping down from off his lofty stand of impeccability, he is human. Throughout, his sense of the dramatic rarely fails him. It is patent that he has felt at all events the outward situations of his characters. But he frequently mars his efforts in expression by over elaboration. And this, although it may enlist the enthusiastic admiration of the student, is to be deplored by the mature artist. Again, with Prosper Merrimé impersonality in art was

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the central aim. His self-effacement was his most noticeable characteristic, so much so that his impersonality became absolutely personal. He had no atmosphere about him. Now while there is no atmosphere of Merrimé in the music of "Colomba," there is frequently present the personality of the musician. It does not often amount to mannerism, but it is none the less there. How far personality or impersonality is right in music is a complex question, but it seems to me that this lack of "atmosphere," alike in "Carmen" and "Colomba," is a negative quality which goes to make them eminently suitable for musical illustration. Here its subtleties may come in and supply just what is needed to make perfection. To supply this demands something of impersonality on the part of the musician. Bizet recognised it, and as was the case with Merrimé, his very impersonality became a characteristic of him.

If, then, one were in any way justified in applying the word 'failure' to "Colomba," here would lie the cause. There are qualities lacking in the art of George Bizet which are characteristic features of that of the Scotch musician. There are in "Colomba" examples of workmanship, of musical combination, of orchestration and

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design, which enthral and delight, and therefore there is much of actual achievement. It is a step in the right direction, and though I do not go so far as to say that in "Colomba" he has grasped the situation so decisively as to render the future of our lyrical drama no longer doubtful, it is easy to join with the critic who did say so, in heartily congratulating the composer upon his maiden effort. It was a careful and conscientious one, and, as such, it will always be worthy of artistic admiration, while amongst our English operas it certainly takes a foremost rank.

When produced at Drury Lane in 1883 "Colomba" was highly successful, at all events as regards the music. Besides the advantage of having such artists as Madame Valleria and Mr. Barton McGuckin in the leading rôles, it had been thoroughly rehearsed by both chorus and orchestra. Previous experience with "Jason" had made the composer doubly watchful on this score. When his cantata had been produced at the Bristol Festival, it was without one thorough rehearsal. Mackenzie, on his arrival at the Hall for rehearsal, which was called for seven o'clock, was informed that the "Redemption" had to be gone through first. The consequence was

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that it was nigh upon ten o'clock before "Jason" came on, by which time both band and chorus were utterly incapable of watchful attention. When half way through, finding they were all 'dribbling' away before his eyes, he stopped the band, and announced his intention of withdrawing the work altogether. Ultimately he was prevailed upon to reconsider his decision. Nevertheless, "Jason" was performed without a full rehearsal, the latter half of the work being gone through by the soloists and the band, but without chorus. The Press, although they did not hesitate to express their indignation at the time, were agreed that under the circumstances the performance at the Festival was wonderful. But such hairbreadth escapes do not bear repetition, and henceforward the composer determined to personally supervise the production of each of his works. Resident as he was in Italy, this entailed no small amount of journeying to and fro. But his love for the place was so strong that he remained on.

Success invariably brings success, and commissions for various works now began to come in. Previous to the production of "Colomba" the Birmingham Festival Committee had

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approached him. But there the matter had remained; they had been unable to come to any definite decision. When therefore on the evening of the production of his opera Mr. Randegger came to him with the request for a work for Norwich, he felt no compunction in closing with the offer. By this lack of action on their part the Birmingham people were no small losers, for the work which followed was "The Rose of Sharon."

Before settling down seriously upon his oratorio he left Borgo-alla-Collina and returned to his apartments on the Lung'Arno. These years formed the happiest period of his life. Here from this Italian vantage ground he could look back on the days of toil through which he had come, and feel secure that they were in the past, and that the real drudgery of his life was done. The tranquillity he had sought he had found. He was at liberty to pursue his art in peace, when and how he would. The financial results of his work, though by no means great, were all sufficient for his daily needs. His pleasure he found in his work. He had discovered his task and was doing it, and, after all, that is the truest pleasure in life, and the man thus occupied is to be envied. Riches may not

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be his until his capacity for their enjoyment is past; fame may not be his until its glory has faded, but if he love his art and have the wherewithal to supply the daily wants of himself and those dependent on him, he may still have happiness. And on it his art will surely thrive.

I have already spoken of "The Rose of Sharon." It is in some respects his *magnum opus*. As regards the subject, the original suggestion came, I believe, from Mr. Joseph Bennett. Indeed I have often wondered what our composers would do without Mr. Bennett. *Facile princeps* as he is amongst English librettists, he has done much to aid the cause of our music, not alone by actual literary achievement (of which he has accomplished a vast deal), but by the wisdom and the knowledge which he has displayed in directing the thoughts of composers towards subjects with which they have invariably been in sympathy. Moreover, his style is suggestive, and his acquaintance with the musician's art is no less intimate than his taste is fastidious and unerring.

In dealing with "The Song of Solomon" he has conspicuously proved this. In the first place, he has adopted the reading which, put forth by Ewald, had the powerful support of

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Ernest Rénan, who, with the German commentator, held the 'Song of Songs' to be a dramatic poem with a fully developed plot in five acts corresponding to so many days. In so adopting this reading, Mr. Bennett confesses to no partiality. He simply saw in the ingenious commentaries of the learned Hebraists, 'suggestions for a story of unconquerable love, capable of expression in the language of the Bible.' For the arrangement of the incident he is alone responsible, and in those instances where he has departed from the original, it has been with the object of arriving at greater dramatic consistency. Consequently, "The Rose of Sharon" is essentially a 'dramatic' oratorio, and its outlines little different from those of Grand Opera. Divided as it is into 'parts,' each is complete in itself. Between the individual numbers there is no break. The advantage of this as regards musical continuity is immediately apparent. Conducive also to continuity is the indulgence in 'representative themes.' In this respect the composer merely carries to a further stage what Mendelssohn did in the "Elijah" and Gounod in the "Redemption." In his treatment of those portions of the story where 'action' is the prominent feature, he subordi-

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nates all else to dramatic expression, but with all this there is, as regards absolute 'form,' little that is new in the work. It is as a successful example of the blending of modern thought with classic form that it is most keenly interesting. Anything like a due consideration of the music is here out of the question, if for no other reason than that of its excessive length. A few only of its prominent features can be noticed.

In the prologue which suggests the parabolic character of the drama, and which is built up mainly on a theme sung by the Shulamite in the third part, to the words 'Love is as strong as death,' we have one of the most effective pieces of detail in the score. I refer to the use of this theme upon the words, 'We speak concerning Christ and His Church.' Mr. Bennett has suggested—and no doubt rightly—that in emphasising this theme (which is in reality the 'motto' of the whole work) upon these words, the composer intended to convey the idea that the love which is 'strong as death' binds together the Church and her Divine Head. Its treatment would certainly seem to endorse this view. Nothing could be more impressive than the means employed, which consist of the substitu-

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tion of the major for the minor key, and the entry of the organ together with the brass and drums followed by a *quasi fanfare* for three cornets. The effect obtained is complete, the intention never for a moment in doubt.

The employment of the 'vineyard' theme as an accompaniment to the tenor solo, "Rise up, my love," which follows the initial chorus, is decidedly happy, though, had it been accomplished at a smaller sacrifice to melodic symmetry, the result would have been more satisfying. What fault there is with it is certainly more noticeable to the eye than to the ear (at all events at first hearing). This is because the delicate orchestral combinations (especially that of the harps with the English horn) so arrest the attention as to make all else subservient in interest. Throughout the score a consummate skill in the treatment of the motives is apparent, and for purity of style with economy of means, the composer has done nothing more beautiful than the orchestral intermezzo typical of "Spring Morning on Lebanon." The choral writing is throughout massive. For contrapuntal ingenuity and nobility of conception, I would single out that in G Major in the second part of the work, "Make a joyful noise unto the

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Lord," while in that of the maidens of Jerusalem who "pass with timbrels and solemn dances," the use of the augmented second lends its usual characteristic colour to a conception wholly in keeping with it. After the passing of the Ark, borne by the Levites, the populace break out into a grand chorus, "Arise, O Lord, unto thy rest," which in its central episode has the words, "Tremble before Him, O ye nations." The power which the composer exhibits in the setting of these words is truly great. Nor is it obtained by aught but legitimate means. He has himself well in hand. His music is straightforward, solid, and impressive. His dramatic instinct serves him well, and his musical sense is never at fault. The only blot upon the 'scutcheon of "The Rose of Sharon," is that it is in many parts unvocal. Beautiful as its phrases invariably are in themselves, and effective as they would certainly be upon violin or 'cello, upon flute or clarionet, their ineffectiveness when sung is frequently apparent. Sometimes the conception is at fault: that is, the phrase has not been 'vocally' (as opposed to instrumentally) conceived; at others it is mere detail of melodic position that is inconvenient, or the syllabic consideration that is unhappy. Take for example

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the soprano solo in the third part "Lo, a vineyard hath Solomon at Baalhamon." The music lies so that if it were given to the tenor it would be highly effective. When this is said we have some idea of the result when it is sung by the soprano. Not that its absolute compass is beyond reach. That is not so, for the whole melody is found between G on the first line and its octave. But there it lies ever upon the upper portion of the stave; the greater part of it between B flat and G. Were it a matter of 'vocalising' on several vowels all objection would vanish, but for a soprano to successfully accomplish the adequate pronunciation of our language at well nigh note for word under such conditions is indeed difficult. Only in the rarest instances could it be attended with anything like satisfactory results.

No composer can be too careful in the musical handling of our somewhat unwieldy tongue. Such matters as I have alluded to may be counted minor points, they are none the less for that—vital. The careful consideration of them is an important factor of success and an unerring sign of the great artist. Again, on such occasions (and they are not infrequent in English poetry) as when the rhythm cuts across

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the metre, his sense of allegiance to the former cannot be too nice. Woe to him if his rhythmical sense serve him false. Can anything be more horrible than the undue musical accentuation of the smaller particles of the language? Yet some great musicians, not duly appreciating the importance of such details, relegate them to the sphere of insignificance. But that way madness lies.

For the production of "The Rose of Sharon" which took place at the Norwich Festival of 1884, Mackenzie returned to England. His stay turned out to be of more lengthy duration than he had anticipated. The inducement held out to him was an offer from Messrs. Novello to conduct a series of Oratorio concerts. Their intention was to revive the Oratorio concerts which they had given from 1869–1875. He thought well of the scheme and accepted their offer. This of course necessitated a return to Italy to arrange his affairs and remove his family to London. Arrived here again he settled down in Sydenham, pursuing his composition the while as actively as ever. He had brought with him from Florence a score which is highly representative of his Italian period —the Ballad for orchestra on Keats's *La*

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Belle Dame sans Merci. At Sydenham his thoughts once more turned towards Opera, but ever before him was the momentous question of the libretto. In the case of "Colomba" the Press had not hesitated to express their opinion as to the inadequacy of Mr. Hueffer's work. Yet he felt grateful for the chance which that work had given him of testing his power with the public, and actuated solely by such feeling, he went to his librettist with a request for another 'book.' In so doing he acted expressly against the advice of his friends, and the result proved only too conclusively that he was unwise. The collaboration resulted in the *Troubadour*, and in due time the opera was produced by Carl Rosa. The libretto proved to be quite 'impossible' for effective musical illustration. Only in the last act can it be said to be in any degree inspiring to the musician. The music could not but reflect its inadequacy, and for that reason I prefer not to take the work as in any respect representative of its composer.

In the early part of this year our musician paid a visit to his native land, where he seems to have been accorded an enthusiastic reception. In Edinburgh he was banqueted and fêted.

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On one of these occasions the chairman, in wishing "long life, success, and continued fame" to Mr. Mackenzie, permitted himself to remark that "in spite of his hereditary advantage, Mr. Mackenzie like every good and true man, had had his own battle to fight, and his own difficulties to surmount at the commencement of his career, but nothwithstanding all these, the divine spark within him would not be quenched. The soul of music within his breast behoved to find expression. Accordingly every spare hour was devoted to his beloved study, and he had become master of all the resources of his art, so that when the proper time and proper opportunity arrived he had produced a masterpiece which at once challenged the admiration of the public. Like Lord Byron, he awoke one morning and found himself famous," and so on. In fact there was no end to the eulogy and the flattery to which these delighted people gave vent. And in the midst of all this, is it to be wondered at that the man thus fêted and thus hailed should turn his thoughts to those weary times when all was dark, and no one hand stretched out to him in fellowship? In those days his yoke had worn him very deeply, and he had been so tired of toil; in his moments of

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submission, in his moments of revolt, one word of encouragement, one offer of help would have been so much to him. Now he did not need them, and they were showered upon him. He could not move unaccompanied by good wishes for his health, wealth, and prosperity. He was a successful man, and they felt him to be one of themselves. They, as his fellow countrymen, had the right to claim him as their own, and right well did they avail themselves of it. But there was something grimly humorous in it all.

He returned to London to conclude the first series of the 'Novello' concerts. This series was a notable one, for it was inseparably connected with the visit to London of Franz Liszt. The forty-six years which had elapsed since his last visit had witnessed some great changes both in English music itself and in English taste as regards foreign music. Most of the Hungarian pianist's rhapsodies and symphonic poems had been introduced and received with more or less favour at the concerts of Hans Richter. Mr. Manns at the Crystal Palace had also turned his attention to them. But to the great mass of the public who do not attend orchestral concerts his name as a composer conveyed nothing. True, Dr. Wylde had in 1870 conducted a per-

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formance of a portion of his "St. Elizabeth," but with that exception his choral works had received no attention in this country. So far all inducements held out to him to again visit the Metropolis had been of no avail. It was now suggested that at the last concert of this resumed series, there should be given a performance of his oratorio, "St. Elizabeth." His friend and pupil the late Walter Bache wrote to Liszt and informed him of this, saying at the same time that the pleasure which the conductor, Mr. Mackenzie, anticipated from the performance of the work would be increased a hundredfold if it were in his presence. To the surprise of all he fell in with the proposal. "Mackenzie," he said, "Ich schulde Ihm etwas. (I owe him something.) I will come."

On the third of April in that year (1886) he arrived. At Westwood House, Sydenham, the residence of Mr. Henry Littleton, with whom he stayed during his visit, he was met by Mackenzie, Mr. Walter Bache, and Mr. Alfred Littleton. How he went through the ceremonies and ovations provided for him, in a word, how he endured the awful pangs of "lionising" is well known. But it was misdirected kindness on the part of his friends to have

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persuaded him to play in public. Nothing but disappointment could result from it. The man had aged terribly since he had been last heard here, and the recollection of his performances in the past had been better undisturbed. He attended the rehearsals of his work, and showed himself keenly alive to all that was going on. But on the night of the performance the poor old man, quite worn out with it all, was discovered to be fast asleep in his stall, and quite oblivious to all consideration of 'leit-motives' and the 'Music of the Future.' During his short and intensely busy time in London, Mackenzie was constantly with him, and it was a quiet evening spent together at Westwood House that Liszt declared to have been quite one of the happiest of all. The idea that he had in Florence been guilty of great injustice to his young friend never altogether left him: and this imaginary fault assumed quite abnormal proportions as he aged. His coming to London he looked upon quite in the light of self-castigation for that fault, and it is not too much to say that had not the little *contretemps* in Florence occurred, that of 1840 would have been Liszt's last visit to London.*

* The commencement of a Fantasia on Mackenzie's "Troubadour" was found after Liszt's death on his

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The years 1886 and 1887 saw the production of much important work from Mackenzie. The "Story of Sayid" written for the Leeds Festival, the "Jubilee Ode," produced at the Crystal Palace, and the "Twelfth-night Overture," were the outcome of this period. At the same time the degree of Doctor of Music was conferred upon him, 'honoris causa,' by the Scottish University of St. Andrews. But with the following year of 1888, came a change in the current of his life. He had given way once more to his love for his Italian home, and had returned in the latter part of '87 to Florence. Hardly had he done so when the news reached him of the death of Sir George Macfarren.

Of the extent to which this sad event was eventually to affect him he had no idea. He knew full well that a good friend and true musician had been lost, but that it should fall to his lot to replace him in the office which for the last twelve years he had enjoyed, never for once occurred to him. Yet, as we know, this is exactly what did happen.

In former days when the number of prominent musicians was smaller, it had been the custom of

writing table. It was the great pianist's last effort at composition.

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the Committee of the Royal Academy to name their man, and to invite him to accept the post of Principal. As time went on, and the importance of the office increased, it was found necessary to modify this method. At the time we are speaking of there were two prominent candidates, neither of whose claims—at all events as regards having been past students—could be overlooked. They were Mr. (now Sir) Joseph Barnby, and Mackenzie. That the latter became a candidate for the office was in some degree the result of mere force of persuasion. By this I would in no wise be understood to mean that he entered into the matter with reluctance—far from it. When once he had accepted the idea his interest in it was aroused and increased rapidly. But the initial effort had to be made for him. That done, the canvassing on his behalf was carried on by his friends and admirers of influence and discrimination, men who saw in him their ideal occupant of the post, with an industry which spoke volumes for their admiration for him, both as a man and a musician. For the first time in the annals of the Academy the contest was a hot one. That it was so, naturally intensified the gratification which he felt on the result being made known that he had been chosen to follow in the footsteps of such

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predecessors as Dr. Crotch, Cipriani, Potter, Lucas, Sterndale Bennett, and Macfarren. He determined that no effort on his part should be lacking to justify the confidence placed in him by his supporters. From the first day of his election he put his best foot foremost, and with the aid of his friend the Chairman, Mr. Thomas Threlfall, and others commenced that drastic revision which showed itself to be necessary for the welfare of the institution.

This is not the place for a discussion of *pros* and *cons* in the matter of the régime of the Academy, but I am within the mark when I say that his artistic instinct revolted at the kind of work which he found handed down to him, including as it did the incessant labours of a large local examination scheme which, however profitable it may have been to the Academy, was in no wise in accordance with his views, and which left him no time for the work which he considered the Principal of a prominent musical institution should have to do. It was one of his first acts of office to remove this objectionable feature. At the same time, he felt that a local examination scheme which should be conducted upon a thoroughly artistic and unselfish basis, was highly to be desired, and it was towards the consummation of

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such a scheme that he decided to chiefly direct his energies. For that purpose, he approached the Director of the Royal College of Music, who readily fell in with his views and accorded his co-operation and support. The result has been that we now have for this purpose an Associated Board whose sole existence is for the conduct of local examinations, than which nothing could be more satisfactory. But it has been by one of the greatest sustained efforts of his career that this state of things has been brought about. The difficulties in the way were enormous, the opposition at first well nigh unconquerable; and I think we should beware lest, in the satisfaction which we must feel in the existence of such a boon, the vast labour and indomitable perseverance by which alone it was created pass incompletely realised and inadequately appreciated. The gain has been a national one, and the great results which must accrue will only be fully realised in years to come.

This is only one of the tangible results of Mackenzie's five years of principalship at the Royal Academy. Now that so many musical institutions have arisen and are daily arising, the successful conduct of such a school as this necessitates a very different method of procedure

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than was the case in those days when it held the monopoly. Dr. Mackenzie has firmly grasped this point, and the lines upon which affairs are conducted now are both artistically and financially a vast improvement upon anything which has gone before. One may attend the students' concerts throughout the year and hear the performance of no one of their Principal's compositions; one may search in vain for any partiality to or use of any 'system,' of singing or harmony, or any indulgence in the quackeries of musical art. Everywhere is felt the influence of a man of broad and liberal views, and on all sides is patent the grip which he has and the administrative power which he exercises; and it is to the fact that such qualities are united in the person of a creative musician that we must look if we would fully appreciate the good fortune of the school in the possession of Mackenzie as Principal. True, he looks back with a considerable amount of distaste upon the initial period of his office, and is grateful that it is in the past. This will cause no surprise to those who may chance to have been at all intimately acquainted with the inner workings of the school. But against this it is good to know that he enjoys his present work, and looks forward to

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still greater pleasure derivable from the success of the institution to the welfare of which he has devoted himself so earnestly. And there can be no doubt that in the future the solidity of his methods will be amply proven by results. Indulgence on the part of the chief of any scholastic establishment in momentary theories, founded for the most part—as such theories usually are—upon idiosyncratic or temporary partiality, would without question be attended by the most disastrous consequences. It is a rock ahead against which the holder of such a responsible position must be ever on his guard. Neither Brahms nor Wagner nor any other god should he worship or allow to be worshipped to the exclusion of all else. So long as he keep before him that which is solid and that which is positive, that which is unpretentious and true, so long and so long only will he be on the right path. And this we can safely say has been his course, no less so in practice than in theory.

In his music he has steered a middle course. At times it is eclectic almost to a fault. If for the nonce—to use his own words—he puts on the Wagner greatcoat, we probably discover that he wears the vest of Berlioz beneath. There is music from his pen which could own Massenet

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for master, though it is more the Massenet of "Herodiade" than of "Manon." Indeed there are times when he has been very near coming under the spell of that which we term 'French' in modern music. From this the influence of his German training has saved him. He has avoided flippancy in his art, even if in doing so he has at times bored us, and of his force when occasion demands it there can be no doubt, though it is descriptive rather than emotional. But it is never the force of accident; he is ever conscious of his purpose, clear in his method and design. Of all his works those which represent him most happily are "La Belle Dame," and "Twelfth Night." In them he has most nearly approached great achievement. In the former he has grasped the fact, which Mr. Sidney Colvin has so ably pointed out, that Keats's ballad does not so much relate narrative, as it "sets before us, with imagery drawn from the mediæval world of enchantment and knight errantry, a type of the wasting power of love, when either adverse fate or deluded choice makes of love not a blessing but a bane." Again, as he says, and truly, "the union of infinite tenderness with weird intensity, the conciseness and purity of the poetic form, the wild yet simple image of the

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cadences, the perfect 'inevitable' union of sound and sense, made of 'La Belle Dame sans Mèrci' the masterpiece, not only among the shorter poems of Keats, but even (if any single masterpiece must be chosen) among them all." The opening 'cello phrase, typical of the first line 'What can ail thee, knight at arms?' is no less happy than that given to the trombones, expressive of the line "'La Belle Dame sans merci' hath thee in thrall," which we may call the 'leit-motive' of the poem. The fetterdom expressed is absolute. It could not have been more completely conveyed. How beautiful the long drawn love melody, and how delicately mingled with the passion which it breathes, is the submission to a power all too strong. It is a musical complement to the poem, nothing more, nothing less. As such, it is a noble effort and a fine achievement, noteworthy no less for musical workmanship than for poetic conception.

The title of the overture which I have bracketed with it is "An Overture to Shakespeare's comedy 'Twelfth Night.'" In thus prefixing the indefinite article 'an,' the composer has but followed in the footsteps of Wagner, who called his "Faust Overture" "A Faust Overture," and Liszt, who did likewise

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with his Faust symphony; implying thereby the musical depiction of an incident in the poem only. That here selected is that in Act II., Scene V., where Maria, acting at the instigation of Sir Toby Belch and Fabian, forges a letter in Olivia's handwriting, in order to make Malvolio think that his mistress is in love with him. The deception of Malvolio is complete, and his consequent behaviour to Olivia so strange, that she, believing that he and his wits have parted company, orders her servants to have him 'looked to,' with the result that he is locked up as a lunatic. For the material of his music-picture the composer uses two 'leit-motives,' the Malvolio theme and the Olivia theme. As one would expect, the former, which is quite happy as representing the grave and self-satisfied ass created by Shakespeare, is first heard on the bassoon. Whilst Malvolio is supposed to be reading the letter, we get the first suggestion of the Olivia motive as indicative of his thoughts. Then follows an *allegro*, suggestive of the huge enjoyment of Maria, Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, and the clown, at Malvolio having so completely fallen into the trap set for him. It is quite brimful of suggestion, both as regards the material and its orchestral conception. In this

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latter respect the overture reveals real genius. The light and airy violin theme, suggestive of Sir Toby's reference to Maria as Penthesilea, the Amazon Queen, the passages for clarionets and bassoons indicating the clown's presence, and the culminating guffaws of 'Sir Toby and the lighter people' at Malvolio's discomfiture are wonderfully happy and effective. He cuts veritable musical capers. His Malvolio truly goes about 'still smiling' with an idiotic grin upon his countenance, and we can imagine his complacent self-conceit, until those scampish and unscrupulous people bring about his fall, and he takes himself off swearing 'I'll be revenged on the whole parcel of you.' It is a delightful piece of well-mannered musical humour, and as an example of instrumental ingenuity without rival amongst his works.

Were I for one moment in doubt as to his greatest talent, this work would decide me. The descriptive facility is so marked. He has quite the greatest power of musical description of any of our musicians, past or present. It is his primary musical virtue. It has, however, its counterbalancing disadvantage, for when, frequently, he would be deeply emotional, it obtrudes itself, and he is merely superficially descriptive.

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He is certainly a musical scholar, besides which he has an intimate knowledge of the work of his contemporaries, both at home and abroad. He can admire Brahms (in some moods) without being oblivious to the charm of Leo Delibes. And these are all points for admiration in an artist. As I have before said, one great blot upon the 'scutcheon of his vocal work is its unvocalness. His best musical conceptions are wholly orchestral. They are, moreover, naturally complex, and thereby he is handicapped. The shape of his melody is angular, and is oftentimes quite ugly in its angularity; and in the smaller of his works, such as his songs, where he must of necessity be simple, and is so, there are times when the thought is more than a trifle stale. Yet we have few songs more beautiful than his settings of Swinburne's "If love were what the rose is," and Locker's "Light slumber is quitting the eyelids."

I have found little of pathos in his music, little that goes very deep, yet I am inclined to think that his great strength lies in the sphere of realism rather than in that of idealism. But the sweep of his imagination is sometimes tremendous. The orchestra in his hands is a thing of might, and some of his works give

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one the impression that, their conception being so broad, the intricacy of detail indulged in treatment is not always to their advantage. His highest point in the realm of idealism has been reached in his "Dream of Jubal"; his greatest directness of expression in the "Story of Sayid." In the latter work, which has for its basis Edwin Arnold's "Pearls of the Faith," one was prepared for a certain amount of local colour. But his indulgence therein has been in no way excessive. Nothing could be more characteristic than his opening phrase, for which the means employed are simple yet thoroughly effective. Throughout he conclusively shows that he can be less complex and not necessarily less interesting. If his metrical and rhythmical sense be not always too nice—as for instance, in the opening of the second part—the masterly way in which he can use the orchestra to his own ends is here, as usual, apparent. It is curious to notice in his pastoral effects the similarity of his procedure with that of the modern French masters. Note, for instance, Sayid's air "Where sets the sun." Again the freedom with which he uses his wood wind is quite a feature of his work. Nothing could be more facile and at the same time descriptive, than the scoring in Ilma's solo

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"First of his prophets, warriors, he," with its arpeggios on the lowest part of the clarionet, and its passages for flute and oboe.

The whole of the colour is obtained by instrumental means alone, the vocal material of itself being quite inadequate, and at times not even auxiliary to the expression of his meaning. He relies entirely on his orchestra. And so it is in "Jubal." The special feature of the work—its accompanied recitation—affords him the greatest scope for the exercise of his symphonic power. It is in no way incidental music. Here with the orchestra alone he arrives at greater results than he has ever done with vocal aid. One resents the entry of the voices, for with them comes a falling off—a sense of dissatisfaction only too apparent. His sense of the instrumentally picturesque never fails him, but the secret of vocal nicety is not his. The music to the words:—

"One day in springtime when the earth was young,
And nature like a maiden beautiful
At sight of her own loveliness rejoiced,
Our father, Jubal, from his tent came forth
To greet the morning sun with cheerful heart"—

is just as beautiful, just as satisfying, as the

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soprano solo, 'The Lord is good unto them that wait for him,' is the reverse. Taken as a whole "Jubal" is quite a remarkable work—full of contrast, full of power, and replete with happy orchestral combinations. For every eight bars of the artisan's work, there are sixteen of the artist's. Yet disastrous as it doubtless is when indulged in to excess, one would gladly welcome somewhat more of sentiment in his work. The gift of self-repression he possesses in a very high degree, and a precious gift it is, but it is just as a counter-agent to it that the addition of the extra modicum of sentiment would be welcome. In the smaller forms of his art he is more unbending, though no less formal outwardly. The many pieces which he has written for his own instrument, show on the face of them the kindly influence of his affection for it. His Concerto, his Benedictus, his Pibroch, each is in its own way ideal violin music. One has only to hear them to recognise it. In the Benedictus itself he has touched a very high point of beauty, and for picturesqueness it would be difficult to beat in modern pianoforte music his "Scenes in the Scottish Highlands."

His Ravenswood music showed him in quite

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a new light, and there are many to whom it will come as a surprise to know that he has by him the score of a comic opera written to a 'book' by the author of "Dorothy."

As a conductor he has had his share of experience, and that confidence is felt in his capacity in this direction is proved by his election to the post vacated recently by his *confrère* Frederic Cowen.

Nothing could be more calculated to show to advantage the possession of such qualities as tact, judgment, cool-headedness, and even forbearance, as a lengthened tenure of the office of conductor to the London Philharmonic Society. Dr. Mackenzie has proved himself to be the possessor of these qualities in no small degree by the quite successful issue of his Academic administration. Let us hope then that the result of this his latest undertaking may prove equally a matter for congratulation. He is a man of courage and of the courage of his opinions, and he is no member of the flaccid class with whom assent is a foregone conclusion In this respect at least he is the right man in the right place. He is in the full vigour of his manhood, and in the full flush of his creative power. Add to this that he is tremendously in

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earnest, and we can justifiably look to him for what—if that which is needful be the capacity for taking infinite pains—will surely be a true work of genius.

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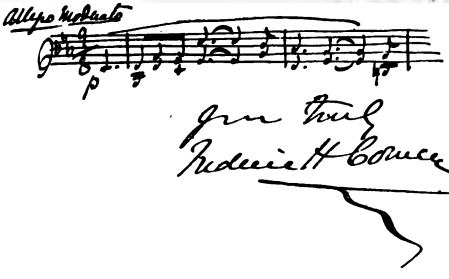

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FREDERIC HYMEN COWEN

It has been said that of the many temptations to artifice and ingenuity which beset the biographer, none is more alluring than the charm of insisting upon the influence which the surroundings of childhood exercise upon the after-life.

This may or may not be so in isolated cases, but I do not think there can be any doubt but that the influences of early life are generally distinctly traceable in the work of many musicians. It may be in a greater or it may be in a lesser degree, according to the natural temperament of the man and the strength and order of the influence. It may be also that there is perceptible in a man's music that which would not be discernible were his means of expression either poetry, palette, or prose. But given that the influence is sufficiently strong, that the artist is sufficiently susceptible (as most

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artists are), and that it directly bears upon his special branch of art, it will surely exert itself upon the man, and through him on his work. In the case of the subject of this biographical sketch the early influence was certainly a happy one.

Frederic Hymen Cowen was born at Kingston in Jamaica on the 29th of January in 1852. His father, Frederic Augustus Cowen, four years after the birth of his son, left the West Indies to settle in England. Arrived here in 1856, he became treasurer to Her Majesty's Theatre, which was at that time under the direction of Mr. Lumley. In this capacity he remained throughout the different administrations of E. T. Smith and Mapleson, only leaving it in 1867, after the disastrous fire, to undertake a similar position under the management of Messrs Mapleson and Gye at Drury Lane.

Simultaneously with his duties as treasurer Mr. Cowen, sen., managed to combine those of secretary, in which relation he was to Lord Ward, afterwards Earl of Dudley, for a period of some twenty years. The late Earl was not only a profound lover of music, but a great patron of all art and things artistic, in reference to which, to quote one instance only, Mr. Charles Santley

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in his recent Reminiscences bears direct testimony, for he says: "A great deal of enthusiasm, which, however, did not last long, had been got up about Gluck at the time Hallé had performed his 'Ifigenia in Tauride' in Manchester, in 1860 and 1861, in consequence of which the Earl of Dudley (then Lord Ward I believe) arranged to have two performances at his residence in Park Lane, for which Tietjens, Reeves, Belletti, and I were engaged."

It will therefore be easily understood that fortune was already beginning to favour young Cowen, for it would have been difficult to have designed surroundings which should have turned out more favourable to the fostering and development of the talents of which he was hereafter to give such strong evidence. And this was so, both directly and indirectly, for it could not but be beneficial to him even at thus early an age to come into contact, as he did, with the greatest operatic stars of that splendid time. Doubtless they made him something of an *enfant gâté*, and that would tend only to make his memories of them the more kindly. From amid all our childish recollections there are always one or two—and often they touch on events themselves most trivial—which stand out

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prominently from the rest. Thus he has never forgotten Piccolomini's performance in the "Traviata," which he saw at five years of age, and the memory of the leave-taking of the great prima donna when she was about to start off on one of her tours is so fresh in his mind as to make it difficult to realise that it happened nearly forty years ago. Then again his affection for Giuligni who, it will be remembered, was the creator of Faust in Gounod's opera in England, is one of the brightest spots of what was a very happy childhood. And if these benefits were great, as they undoubtedly were, even more so were those which he was daily obtaining from being brought up in the atmosphere of music, not of the pianoforte, but of the orchestra. It is undoubtedly in some degree to that early imbibing of orchestral music that he owes the highly developed orchestral sense which is perhaps his strongest point as a composer to-day. As an infant he showed himself to be instantly affected by musical sounds, and his first essays in musical composition were made at the extraordinarily early age of six years. In this the boy received great encouragement at the hands of Henry Russell, whose singing and music caused him the most intense excitement.

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FREDERIC H. COWEN

Aged eight years

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Russell it was who put into musical shape for him his first ideas, which took the form of a waltz entitled "The Minna Waltz," and one or two sets of quadrilles, and a song, "Mother's Love," the words of which had been written by his cousin. At eight years of age he was already an infant phenomenon, for he had, with the aid of his friend in the matter of harmonising and writing down his melodies, completed the music to an operetta entitled "Garibaldi," the libretto of which was also from the pen of his cousin. It was performed privately and printed for private circulation.

It will be seen that the precocity of the boy up to this age was extraordinary. It left no doubt in the minds of those about him as to his ultimate profession. It was with this in view that Earl Dudley, having taken a great fancy to him, decided to lose no time in having his evident talents cared for and trained. Nor could the Earl have been wiser in his choice of professors, for instructors more capable of making the most of the boy's talents than Julius Benedict and John Goss it would have been difficult to find. Accordingly, in 1860 we find young Cowen about to commence serious study of the pianoforte with the former and

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harmony with the latter master. That the two masters were not at one in their methods of teaching may be gathered from the fact that while he used to look forward with something akin to fear to his lessons with Benedict, there was nothing in his daily life which afforded him so much pleasure as his studies with Goss. Nevertheless his progress with the piano was very great, and at twelve years of age he played Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 106, completely to his master's satisfaction.

Thalberg now heard him play, amongst other things, his own (Thalberg's) arrangement of "Home, Sweet Home," and his verdict left no doubt that the boy was destined to become a marked man in his profession. It ought to be noted that up to this time there had been no suggestion that the young musician should devote himself to composition, but rather that he should make the pianoforte his primary study, and that his work in the way of composition should be subordinate to it. In 1863 we have record of his first public appearance, on which occasion he gave a pianoforte recital in the Bijou Theatre (inside Her Majesty's), and concerning which I will quote from the *Daily Telegraph's* critique: "A matinée was given

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in the concert room of Her Majesty's Theatre on Thursday for the purpose of introducing to public notice a youthful pianist of remarkable proficiency and of still greater promise. Master Frederic Cowen is a mere child, but his playing betrays none of those fatal peculiarities which we detect in the prodigies who have been taught by rote a few short pieces which they play in mere parrot-like fashion. A pupil of Mr. Benedict, he has learnt in the best of schools, and in all his performances he displays musician-like feeling no less than mechanical aptitude. His tone is full, his touch firm and decided, and there is nothing careless or slovenly to be detected in his execution. To show the wide scope of his studies we need only mention that the programme included a prelude and fugue by Sebastian Bach, several studies by Henselt, Stephen Heller's charming arrangement of Mendelssohn's "Flügeln des Gesanges," and Mr. Benedict's brilliant "Erin" fantasia. All these were played without book, the music of Mendelssohn's prelude and fugue in E minor being alone placed before the young pianist." He now added to his other studies that of the organ, also with Goss, and the violin with Carrodus.

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Of public activity there is no further record until the next year, when he gave a concert at Dudley House, and was fortunate enough to have the assistance of such artists as Madame Trebelli and her husband, Madame Enequist, Joachim, and Santley. So successful was this matinée that he gave another in the following year, which was remarkable for the introduction of his first serious effort in the region of chamber music. This took the form of a trio for piano, violin, and violoncello. It is for a boy of that age a most remarkable work, for although it evinces no absolute signs of originality (which it could not be expected to do), it does show a decided desire to emulate that which is good in the work of his models, and there is distinctly traceable in this and other early efforts a sense of refinement, and distinct avoidance of anything in the shape of banality, coupled with a love for delicacy and treatment of detail not common in the work of young composers. The performance of this trio by the young musician, assisted by Joachim and Piatti, marked his last appearance in London for the time being. He now entered for the Mendelssohn Scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music, but his parents, finding that the

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regulations of the scholarship enacted that the successful competitor should, whilst pursuing his studies abroad, be under the sole guidance and direction of the committee, decided to withdraw him and send him to Leipsic at their own expense. In the winter, then, of 1865 we have the young student, accompanied by his family, in Leipsic, about to enter the Conservatoire. Here he was placed under Ignatius Moscheles for pianoforte, Moritz Hauptmann (that classicist of classicists) for harmony and counterpoint, and under Reinicke for composition. The result of this discipline bore good fruit, for the boy worked hard and made great progress. In March of the following year his family left for England, and he continued his sojourn in the house of a private family for a further period of three months.

His work now assumed more important form, and he produced his first string quartet and a set of pianoforte variations, and also his first work for orchestra—an overture in D minor.

I have before me as I write a set of six songs, which although bearing the MS. subscription "London," were undoubtedly born of his stay in Germany, for here, although there are numerous little traits by which I can recognise

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in embryo the Cowen of to-day—that is as a song-writer—the German element which pervades them is so strong as to almost obliterate all else. Nevertheless, the ease and grace which these little compositions show afford very strong evidence of early aptitude for that branch of his art to which their composer owes no small part of his reputation to-day. In his very early pianoforte sonata, which bears the date Sept. 13, 1864, I find very much more to guide me towards a discovery as to the direction in which his natural gifts would of themselves have led him, for in this work, which astonishes chiefly by the grip with which its author handles his material, there is evidence of more gentle guidance on the part of the teacher, as opposed to those actual partialities which seem to have been, so to speak, forced upon him in Germany.

Of his progress in the matter of pianoforte playing the following extract from one of his letters to his parents speaks for itself:

"I had to go to rehearsal on Monday morning at the Gewandhaus and play my piece. It went all right, so Schleinitz said I could play it in the Prüfung.* You will see by the programme

* "Offentliche Prüfung": the public examination.

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that I opened the ball. The hall was very full, but I was not in the least nervous; I even played without music, which is not much the fashion in Leipsic. I was very much applauded, and think I made a success.* . . . . Mr. P. says I played ever so much better then he expected. . . . . I can assure you that it is all owing to Plaidy and his five-finger exercises. You will see the difference in my touch when I come back to England."

If his talent was precocious—as it certainly was—his ambition was a worthy companion to it, for, writing from Leipsic at this time, he says: "I must now finish, as I have other things to do; and talking of that, I must also finish my overture before I can leave Leipsic. If Reinicke is pleased with it, I should like to have it performed in London at the Philharmonic or the Musical Society concerts."

That there were no half-measures with the young musician can be easily seen, and it is only just to him to say that this commendable earnestness and intention to be 'aut Cæsar aut nullus' is sufficiently apparent in the work itself. It is undoubtedly ambitious, and he has

* The work chosen was Beethoven's Concerto in C Minor.

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taken the best of masters in whose footsteps to follow; and when one considers the date which the MS. bears—June 17, 1866 (it was finished in London)—its achievement is certainly enough to warrant the greatest of hopes being entertained for the future of its composer. Of fancy in the scoring there is decided evidence; of indulgence in the use of the 'brass' a welcome absence; while of musicianly feeling and sense of colour there is no lack. Of the musical thought contained in it, one cannot reasonably expect originality in any marked degree, for at fourteen years of age the mind of the afterwards creative artist is occupied in gathering to itself that which it admires and is in sympathy with in the works of various masters. His ambition with regard to its performance at the Philharmonic concerts was not destined to be realised; but the overture was eventually brought to a hearing at the Covent Garden concerts of 1866–1867, where, under the batôn of Alfred Mellon, it made a decidedly pleasant impression.

To retrace our footsteps a few months: In May of the year 1866 the Austro-German war having broken out, his parents, somewhat alarmed at the startling rumours which were being freely circulated concerning its present

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and future developments, recalled their son to London.

The winter of '66–'67 was accordingly spent here, and although for the moment strict study was suspended, he occupied himself in giving concerts, in the contemplation of music, and in the society of musicians, all of which tended towards the development of his natural gifts. In addition to those concerts given by himself—most of which took place at Dudley House—he played at Benedict's annual concert of that year, with marked success, Liszt's paraphrase of the Tannhäuser March.

His return to Germany took place in the following winter, his destination being in this instance Berlin. Arrived there, he entered the conservatoire of Professor Stern, which that master had founded some eighteen years previously in conjunction with Adolph Marx and Theodor Kullak under the title of the "Berlin Musikschule." Marx and Kullak had retired from the scheme in 1856, but notwithstanding this, it was considered, at the time young Cowen entered it, the best music school in Berlin.

Here, in addition to a careful pursuance of his pianoforte studies, he studied composition under Friedrich Kiel—one of the most

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distinguished of masters in counterpoint and fugue. This produced a setting of the 130th Psalm, written for contralto and chorus, a Fantasia for the Pianoforte in D Minor, and a Trio in A Minor for pianoforte and strings. These were completed works. All the time, however, the young musician's powerful ambition was urging him on to greater things, and he was continually sketching, writing and re-writing, isolated movements, which were one day to form themselves into a symphony, the achievement of which was ever before him. His sojourn in Berlin continued for about a year, and in the summer of '68 he returned to London.

The year of 1869 was to be a great one for Frederic Cowen, for it may be said to have seen the turning-point of his career. In this year his first symphony became an accomplished fact. This, together with a concerto for pianoforte and orchestra, was produced at St. James's Hall in December of the same year, and I do not think I am going beyond the mark when I say that its production had a decidedly stimulating effect upon English music and those who took its cause to heart. So, at all events, thought the critic of the *Daily Telegraph*, for he spoke of its containing "not only evidence of

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musical science, remarkable indeed in so young a man, but imagination and originality." He describes the treatment of the instruments as masterly, while in every orchestral effect was manifest the result of delicate fancy and of careful thought. I do not think, on careful examination of the score, that the critic was one whit too kind in his judgment. The more I look into the *allegretto* movement of this work of a youth of seventeen years, the more charming does it become: an influence of Mendelssohn is not lacking, yet there is ever present an individual refinement quite apart, and, moreover, emphatic signs which denote the musician who has something to say, and who knows exactly how he wishes to say it. In this dainty and pastoral *allegretto* is struck the key-note of Mr. Cowen's individuality as exemplified in his happiest creations of the present day. Fault could be found with the opening *allegro*, which is perhaps a little tedious, but the clever 'imitation' in the finale and the beauty of the second theme of the *allegro*, coupled with the charming movement I have drawn attention to, stamp the work as one of very much more than ordinary promise. Now, the Concerto I do not consider worthy of com-

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parison with it in any respect. It suffers from a superabundance of 'pianism,' a blemish to be found not infrequently in the Concerti of older and more experienced composers than this young artist, and one from which to judge from results it seems impossible to altogether get away. The success of the First Symphony was emphatic, but after hearing it performed the composer determined to re-write the finale. This he did, and on the work being played in its revised form at the Crystal Palace concerts, the wisdom of his determination was manifest.

It was in some degree a practical proof of the great hopes which young Cowen had raised for his future, that he was now approached by Mr. John Boosey with a view to the results of his composition during the ensuing three years being published by his firm. An arrangement was arrived at, and the young composer settled down to work in earnest. Anxious to try his hand at vocal writing, he sought about him for a libretto with which he might be in sympathy; finally he decided upon an adaptation by his friend Mr. R. E. Francillon of a German poem of Horn. This was "The Rose Maiden." He immediately set to work, and the cantata was produced at St. James's Hall in November 1870.

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Both the story and music are too familiar to need any description here, and there can be no question that the work is one of the most popular its composer has ever written. But no one looking at it as the successor to the Symphony in C Minor can but be disappointed. It is not the same muse at work. The composer seems to be hampered by his voices; he is conscious of the restraint put upon him by their limitations; he is within four walls from which he cannot emerge. This is proved as strongly in the opposite direction, in the purely instrumental portions of the work, where the whole flavour of the music changes from confinement to freedom. Moreover, the great want of contrast in the story reflects itself strongly on the music, and as a whole one cannot look at the work as in any sense representing its composer even at that time.

Nevertheless, it was cordially received at the first hearing when it had the advantage of an excellent interpretation at the hands of such artists as Titiens, Patey, Nordblom, and Stockhausen as soloists, the choir of St. Thomas' Choral Society, and the composer as conductor.

Here I would mention that shortly before

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the production of this work Cowen had been busily engaged upon the instrumentation of Julius Benedict's oratorio "St. Peter," a considerable part of which he scored for his master, in order that it might be ready for production at the Birmingham Festival, and as a matter of fact the excellency of the orchestration was universally commented upon at the time. There now came an overture and some incidental music to Schiller's "Maid of Orleans," which was written for the Brighton Festival in February 1871; following which the young musician entered into an engagement with Mr. Mapleson to perform the duties of pianist and accompanist to his Italian Opera Company, an engagement which lasted for some years, and was the means of his gratifying to some extent the very powerful love of travel which is within him. It afforded him an immense experience of the stage and of voices, &c., which he afterwards found invaluable.

I fear these concert tours were responsible for no small amount of practical joking, and that opportunities arose which to the lover of that form of sport were irresistible. At all events, it is only fair to say that, although our young friend was invariably the instigator of

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them, they were absolutely harmless and without guile. Moreover, he had no difficulty in finding in his fellow-artists congenial spirits, one and all willing to lend their aid. We have all heard, and many of us have experienced, the fact that there is latent in the Italian tenor more than the usual quantity of human vanity. As to whether there is excuse to be found for him, I will not go into, but will content myself with saying that there was one well-known tenor in this company who was so imbued with a consciousness of his own loveliness and powers of fascination that he fell an easy prey to the wiles of his companions. Maybe that he had had no practical illustration of his 'killing' powers for some little time, and that his friends thought to kill two birds with one stone, and gratify his vanity and their sense of humour. At all events, to our young instigator he proved too tempting a specimen to be resisted, and having procured a photograph of a lovely and bewitching *demoiselle*, it was a matter of small difficulty to get a letter written in a feminine hand, expressing the hopeless adoration of the writer for her hero, and begging for a meeting the next day. I cannot credit the perpetrators with having a due sense of the romantic, for the place arranged

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was, of all others, the platform of the railway station (yet I have no doubt, if platforms could speak, they could unfold wondrous tales of the developments of the tender passion). The tenor did not attempt to hide his joy, but on receiving the missive absolutely 'squealed' with delight. At the appointed hour, dressed in his best, he drove down in a very splendid carriage to gratify his conquest. He ordered a *recherché* repast for two at a neighbouring restaurant and awaited the coming of the fair one. As is usual in these cases, the onlookers saw most of the game; in fact, in this case they saw all of it, for, wearied and sore at heart, the susceptible one at length returned to his apartments a good deal the worse in pocket and in temper. How he sang his part that evening is not related, and having an Italian's allowance of humour, I fancy a considerable time elapsed ere he woke to the true facts of the case; but to the philologist, I take it, his utterances would have been interesting, if not edifying.

A return of the young musician to London and work in due course followed, and commissions from various sources now began to come in. Amongst these was one from the Liverpool Philharmonic Society for a new sym-

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phony, and another from the Norwich Festival Committee for an instrumental work which took the form of an overture.

Both of these were successful, although the first symphony was in no way ousted from its position by the appearance of the second, and remained the most remarkable work of the young composer for the time. In the No. 2 the influence of Mendelssohn is certainly more prominent than in any other of the works. The overture for Norwich is light in structure, and although attractive by its extreme delicacy, shows no serious advance upon its companion efforts. Although he had commenced the composition of this latter in London, it was finished in Weimar, where he went to spend a short holiday with his brother, who was there studying painting. In a letter written from here we have mention of a meeting with Franz Liszt. (Surely Liszt was the most 'met' man of his time!) This is what he says: "I have been twice to see Liszt, who is living here at present, and found him very agreeable. I played him my new symphony, with which he was very pleased and surprised. He said he hardly expected as much from an *Englishman!*" (The italics are

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my own.) From Weimar to Switzerland is no very great journey, and thither, attracted by his love for natural scenery, he eventually made his way. Cowen, ever ambitious to 'climb,' now did so in a very practical sense, and contracted a love for mountaineering which only increased with time. He is now one of the most enthusiastic mountaineers in England, and has well nigh as intimate a knowledge of most of the European ranges as he has of the streets of London. I know no man who can calmly relate so many hair-breadth escapes, and positively enjoy them and their accompanying discomforts. His return from Switzerland at this time was caused by his presence being required at the Norwich Festival to conduct his overture. This was in September of 1872; and in November, some six weeks later, he left again to join his brother in Weimar, journeying on this occasion by way of Leipsic, where he made a short stay.

Although for his age he had travelled to no small extent, and had profited much from his experience of men and manners, he had not yet visited the land which every artist at some time of his life longs to visit. *La bell' Italia* has charms for most people, but for none more than the musician. Not that one hears good music in

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Italy, for it has been my bad fortune to hear less good music there than in any part of the globe. This of course one does not discover until after arrival; but to the composer there is no atmosphere so stimulating, so productive of ideas; no surrounding so much in harmony, no life so tranquil, as is to be found in Italy.

It has been said that "a year of downright loitering is a desirable element in a liberal education," and if this is so in the case of men devoted to what we may term positive pursuits, how much more desirable is it in the education of artists or musicians, who require impressions and materials which come to them frequently by pure accident, and are not always to be found for the searching. Claude Tillier spoke truly when he said: "Le temps le mieux employé est celui que l'on perd." Any time spent in such intelligent *flânerie* must be termed well spent.

With Frederic Cowen the intervals spent in this wise were, although frequent, necessarily of short duration. They were snatched from the midst of his daily work, and were for that reason perhaps the more enjoyable and beneficial. Let us hear what he says:

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"MILANO,
"Sunday, *Oct.* 19, 1878.

"I imagine every one's thoughts on coming to Italy must be something like this: 'Is it really true that I am at last in the land of sunny skies, pretty women, and maccaroni, and that what I have longed for and dreamt of for years has at last come to pass?' I know this is what I thought on arriving here, and I can hardly realise the fact yet: I believe I am dreaming, and shall wake up in my own home in the course of a few minutes. The most extraordinary thing is, that it all looks much like any other country, and the people walk about and look just like other people, save that they are many shades darker. I suppose, however, when I get an insight into their habits I shall find a difference. I have said above, this is what I thought on arriving here, and I used the words advisedly as I consider Turin a would-be-Italian-but-can't-succeed kind of place; in fact, a snare and a delusion. Firstly, they speak as much French there as Italian, if not more; secondly, the women are not pretty; and thirdly, I certainly saw no sunny sky. It poured when I arrived; it was still pouring when I left. Then did I stand up and address the heavens: 'It is

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no use, old fellow, your attempting to persuade me that you are Italian; I know better. You are an out-and-out Cockney, and the sooner you return to the land of your birth the better for you.' Putting down my umbrella, I waited for him to speak, which he did very soon, and so forcibly that I was obliged to put it up again and beat a hasty retreat."

Now, my own experience tells me that this is no libel on either city. I defy any town to exhibit the power of making itself unpleasant to a greater extent than can Milan from October to February. Turin is much the same. Therefore he is wise who tarries not in either place at that season, but journeys on until a glance from the window reveals to him the dark but comely faces of the Neapolitans and their Bella Napoli, or its still lovelier surroundings of Capri, Salerno, or Sorrento. Yet, with all its obeisance to Jupiter Pluvius, it were better to be in Milan than out of Italy; so, at all events, felt our young musician, for to judge from his subsequent letters from there he came to love the place. One does:—that is, one either loves or hates it: there can be no mere tolerance of Italy.

That our friend is not without some sense

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of the humorous can be easily gathered from his letters, to which I will again refer. Moreover, there are two very opposite qualities in his character—his appreciation of the value of solitude; and the hearty interest which he takes, and always has taken, in human life, as regards things both great and small.

Here are some impressions recorded in a letter from Turin:—"On arriving here, it was pouring cats and dogs, so I went to the best hotel. On asking for the *salle-à-manger*, I was shown into a magnificent saloon capable of holding four or five hundred people. There was one other man in an opposite corner, having his supper! This was, at all events, consoling. I entered into conversation with the waiter. "I said: 'Your hotel does not seem quite full.' He replied: 'No; but it was yesterday.' Whereupon I answered: 'Perhaps it will be to-morrow?' He changed the subject, and asked me what I would take. I asked him what he could recommend, and he spoke of a 'filetto.' Now, I was not quite certain whether this was a kind of thread or something to eat; it however turned out to be the latter, and I ate it. I also consumed several yards of bread. This is a fact. They make here what they call *grissini*,

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bread about a yard long, and a third as thick as your little finger—all crust. This is the best thing about Turin, and is so fascinating that when once you begin you cannot leave off eating it. . . . . I also drank something which they called 'tea,' and which had the effect of keeping me awake until four o'clock—at least, it was partly the tea, and partly the result of there being some six or seven clocks in the neighbourhood, all striking the quarters, and each three minutes ahead of the other!"

Before touching further upon our artist's sojourn in Italy I should say that he had an ostensible object in visiting the country. It was his desire to write a grand opera to an Italian libretto on the subject of the "Lady of Lyons." With this object prominently before him, he lost no time in seeking a librettist who should answer his requirements. To this I will refer later; in the meantime, it is interesting to hear what he had to say on the music which he heard in Milan, for what is true of musical performances of twenty years back differs in no very great degree, as regards performance, from that which is true to-day: "After having been to call upon Madame Lucca, I had my dinner at the hotel, and then went to the Teatro

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Carcano to hear Petrella's 'Promessi Sposi.' . . . . It is the greatest rubbish that has ever been written, and how a man can have obtained a reputation upon such grounds is a mystery to me—or rather was, as I am beginning now to understand the Italian taste in music, and have found out that a great deal goes down here in *musical* Italy which we in *unmusical* England would have nothing to do with: that a singer has only to screech at the top of his voice to be applauded to the echo, and that a composer has only to write a mixture of Verdi, Donizetti, and Bellini, with a great predominance of the former, to be thought a genius. Although I intend, if possible, to have my opera performed here first (when it is finished), I do not intend to write this modern Italian music, and if my work should fail, it will do so from a good reason, at all events."

A week or so following this letter he writes that he has been recommended a librettist by the Editor of "Il Trovatore," to whom he carried letters of introduction, and that, having arranged terms with the poet, they are to commence work on the opera almost immediately.

There is no doubt that Cowen was at this time greatly fascinated by the "Lady of Lyons"

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as a subject for musical treatment, for he writes: "The more I look over the 'Lady of Lyons,' the more I feel what a splendid subject it is, and if I can only write music to it according to my feelings, the opera *must* be successful."

He mentions many charming acquaintanceships and a few friendships formed in Italy, and seems to have enjoyed to the full the artistic intercourse in the midst of which he was. The time could not have been passed more pleasantly, for while pursuing his work he was able to refresh himself with pleasures as improving as they were enjoyable: his walks in the picture galleries, his study of the language and of the people, were each absorbing and interesting in themselves and together.

In December he left for Venice. The Queen of the Adriatic impressed him greatly. "To my idea," he says, "her greatest beauty is the melancholy look she has. All the houses are so mysterious, as if each one had some dreadful secret; the 'gondoli' have such a dismal appearance with their black coverings, and the continual lapping of the oars has such a sad sound." His letters teem with his impressions of the various objects around him, but I must

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perforce content myself with those I have quoted.

A return to London, although meaning a return to the sterner realities of everyday life, did not necessarily entail an entire cessation from travel, for he made several tours through the United Kingdom, and later on in Sweden, in company with Madame Trebelli. I must not forget to say *en passant* that the Italian libretto supplied him in Milan never proved entirely satisfactory, and although he had sketched portions of the work, the music was never written. In fact from 1875–76 he put out very little in the way of composition. This intermittance of production, far from being in any sense deplorable, was, I maintain, of much benefit to him. His intellectual habits were then, and always have been, excellent, and his love of literature very great. By the help of the latter he was gradually attaining a steadiness which placed him much in advance, both as regards thought and the expression of it, of many of his fellow-workers.

That tragic element which there is in human life, and which intrudes itself, not infrequently when we are most happy, now thrust itself upon him in the shape of his father's death. Apart

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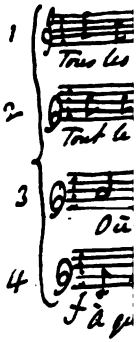
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from the blow, which was a terrible one to him, it left him entirely dependent upon his own resources. This was in 1876.

In the same year he received a commission from the Committee of the Birmingham Festival (through the influence, be it said, of Sir Michael Costa) to write a cantata. This giving him a definite object for work, he again fell back upon his friend Francillon to write his libretto. It took the form of an adaptation of Byron's "Corsair," and was produced at the Festival in August of the same year.

The librettist, while compressing and rounding the story to his dramatic requirements, kept in view the original poem so far as was practicable under the circumstances. Strictly speaking, the only variation of any consequence is in the *dénouement*, when Conrad, returning to the island which is his piratical home, instead of finding Medora dead, finds her sufficiently alive to die in his arms, ostensibly of a broken heart.

Not the least successful feature of this cantata is the cleverness with which, in his first few bars of instrumental prelude, the composer has struck the key-note of the whole work. There is an abundance of what is commonly termed

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'local colour,' while in the use of character themes, or *leit-motiven*, he also indulges freely. The melody employed throughout as representative of the affection of Medora and Conrad, the quaint unison theme which is associated with Medora herself, and an impetuous phrase annunciative of Conrad, are all thoroughly in keeping with their respective characters. The work as a whole shows abundant fancy and a forcible grasp of subject which is a distinct advance upon the "Rose Maiden." The success at the Festival was emphatic.

I have already said that the opera on the subject of the "Lady of Lyons," for which an Italian libretto was written, was never finished. Nevertheless, it is quite clear that Cowen had not been in any way put out of conceit with his subject, for on Carl Rosa coming to him with a request for an English Opera, his thoughts immediately centred themselves once more around Lytton's play. He set to work, and produced the opera, which was entitled "Pauline," in a little under two months. Needless to say, the work suffered in consequence: the thoughts contained in it, although frequently good in themselves, are not infrequently expressed rudely, crudely, even indelicately. I

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think it was Henri Regnault who said "Il faut chercher lentement, longuement puis produire vite." This is well in its way, but at best only applies to the mature artist who has attained absolute freedom in the expression of his thoughts. If a man have the facility of rapid execution, he should be only the more severe upon himself, and sacrifice without hesitation the result of great labour should he perceive that in a change there lies the capability for greater directness of expression, and consequently a better effect.

It would be manifestly unfair to take "Pauline" as in any way representative of its composer's cultivation at that period. It was played for a few nights at the "Lyceum," after which it was withdrawn. Nevertheless, Carl Rosa entered into negotiations with the composer for him to remodel it, and the task of revision was actually begun, but ultimately, dissatisfied with the work, Cowen threw it up. It is to my mind evident that he did wisely. The story had, as we have seen, been for long the subject of his contemplation, and just at a period when his thoughts were changing most rapidly. His conception of it, from a literary and dramatic point of view, no doubt

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suffered but little variation; but his method of musical expression was undergoing rapid change, and such a thing as revision would either have resolved itself into entirely re-writing the work, or would have been disastrous. This it was, no doubt, that caused his dissatisfaction with it. The late Carl Rosa, not considering these artistic niceties, resorted to legal action to compel the composer to proceed with his revision, but, happily, before the matter came to a hearing an arrangement was arrived at. *R.I.P.*

His health now began to fail, and his passion for travel having only increased by his short indulgence in it, he decided to seek in it recovery of both mind and body. After having made a trip through the United States, he returned much better in health and spirits, and prepared himself for a good spell of serious work.

The turning-point in his career had now come; the period of transition was over, and the work which was to prove the foundation of his present rank and matured style begun. This was his third Symphony in C Minor, better known as the "Scandinavian." As, besides being absolutely representative of its composer,

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this composition has taken its place in Europe as one of the greatest orchestral works of modern times, a somewhat closer consideration of it will not, I think, be thought out of place. First, as to its title. No better explanation could be given—if explanation be required—than that by Mr. Joseph Bennett in the programme of the concert which took place on December 18, 1880, and which was one of a series of Saturday Orchestral Concerts inaugurated by the composer to which I shall have occasion to refer later.

"It is said that Mendelssohn on returning from his first visit to Scotland was asked to give his impressions of the 'land of brown heath and shaggy wood,' and that in response he moved to the pianoforte, and played the half-tender, half-melancholy theme which opens his A Minor Symphony. The act well became a master who held that the language of music is far more definite than that of words. But no such belief as this is necessary to see the naturalness of the course taken by the musician when he seeks to convey impressions through the medium of his art. To such a process he is moved as by instinct, and through no other could he arrive at the result desired. The

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symphony now heard owes its origin to the impulse just pointed at. It is an effort on the part of the composer to reproduce in music the ideas and emotions suggested by the stern mountains and gloomy forests, the silent fiords and sounding shores of Scandinavia, as viewed, not merely in their physical aspects, but also in the light of the heroic traditions and fantastic legends which make that country so attractive to men of our kindred race. Far from surprising, therefore, is it to find much of the music aiming at 'characteristic' effect—to find, for example, that some of the peculiarities of Scandinavian melodies are reproduced, and that throughout, Northern tenderness alternates with Northern strength and grandeur. No one will assert that herein the composer makes aught but a legitimate use of his art. Music doubtless has its proper home in the ideal, but it can bend down to the natural, that each may receive of the qualities of the other, for, says Schlegel, 'in a beautiful work of the imagination the natural should be ideal, and the ideal natural.'"

The above description is, I think, excellent of the work. We have touched upon the composer's visits to the "Land of the Midnight

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Sun"; it was but natural that the impressions there received should take shape and be expressed by him through the medium of his art.

It is one of the most characteristic features of these days this quest for 'local colour.' It has become almost a matter of faith. Every one believes in it, and every one looks for it, assuming it to be something which one can buy, like paint, by the pound. It has been pointed out that "the same means that Gounod employs for French Pastoral effects, Grieg uses to give a Scandinavian twang, Rubinstein for a Persian flavour, and Chopin for a perfect Polish style." It is but fair to add that this was said in reference specially to the use of the "double-pedal" or *point-d'orgue*. But it is in resorting solely to such means as these that we obtain local mannerisms instead of true local colour. If a composition have to depend on such bases for its colour, it is but a poor thing, and it is for his very independence of such subterfuges as this that the composer of this symphony is to be commended. I need hardly say that to put down either Gounod's Pastoral effects or Chopin's Polish style as being obtained by this means alone, is a libel. It is an effect used by

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them in its legitimate place, but the true colour of their work lies in its conception; without this, such technical resources would be of but small avail.

As conspicuous amongst the many exquisite details which abound in the opening movement of this symphony, I would point out the return of the second 'subject,' which, after frequent iterations of the first theme, literally all over the orchestra, comes upon us in the brilliant colour of the key of E major. It is as if the sun burst forth in all its wealth of brightness from out the sombre mass of cloud. Schumann himself could not have been more happy.

To those who have not seen a Norwegian fiord I know of nothing so likely to convey a true sense of its individuality so much as one of M. Normann's beautiful pictures. They invariably represent a lake, the water of which seems to be unfathomable, of exquisite clarity, and, one would imagine, intense coldness. On either side are the gigantic walls of wooded rock, like so many hoary old giants rising sheer out of the glacial surface below into peaks of enormous height. Then on the narrowest of narrow ledges he perches a châlet, with its red tiles glistening in the sunlight, while in the

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distance is a break in the purple grey heights leading to a lovely stretch of open country beyond. Over all this he spreads a distinctive Northern colour which quite defies description.

For the glare of a brilliant yet cold sun, substitute the silver sheen of the moon, and we have some idea of the scene which is in the mind of our musician when he writes the second movement of his symphony.

Add to this physical aspect the enormous wealth of mythology which in the mind of the cultured musician springs to light simultane ously with such a picture—the suggestiveness, the mystic beauty of it—and we have the material which he uses to supply it with a human interest. And who shall say that he is wrong in so doing? As Mr. John Addington Symonds truly points out, did not "Wagner, wishing to create a new musical drama, extract material from the story of Tannhäuser, from Norse mythology, and from episodes of the Arthurian cycle?" William Morris combined the mystic tales of many nations in his "Earthly Paradise." Tennyson rehandled the substance of Malory's "Morte d'Arthur." Again he says: "Mr. Burne Jones has proved that it is possible to treat legends so familiar as that of

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Perseus or the Sleeping Beauty, allegories so old as those of the days of Creation, mythical tales so trite as that of Pan and Syrinx, with freshness and originality, evolving from their kernel something which is vitally in sympathy with modern thought." And this, I take it, is the point of view from which we should look at such a work as the Scandinavian Symphony. The physical scene is merely a 'locale' for the flights of fancy which it engenders.

The 'natural' is but that of which the composer is primarily conscious; the vital essence of his inspiration, although brought to light by it, does not stop here. He is not content with the mere picture of this fiord. The imaginative mind almost unconsciously resorts to an addition of the human element. A musical illustration of scenery *minus* its associations must be impossible. The aim of all music should be to be independent of mere intelligence, and to become a matter of pure sensuous perception. The end and the means should be saturate in each other, and this it is which makes music the ideal art, and it is only by the complete absorption of matter into the form that its highest consummation can be reached.

It is not too much to say that in this *adagio*

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it is reached. Such realism as is here resorted to, by the music of a party of revellers drifting down the moonlit water being heard, is perfectly legitimate. But in the scherzo we are confronted by music which, although decidedly picturesque, climbs down from the heights of imagination to the lower levels of reality. The depiction of a sleigh ride, the suggestion of horses galloping over the frozen snow, the jingling of the bells on the horses' trappings—all this is possible in music, and all this we have done for us here in a very clever and effective manner. It could not have been better or more effectively done; but it is not the same art as that of the first two movements. We have entirely left the sphere of imagination, and instead of being independent of our mere intelligence, and of receiving a beautiful and poetic impression, we find that if it were not for our intelligence in comparing the results obtained by the composer's devices to those of real life, we should receive no impression at all. Not that this is done at any sacrifice to the art as regards its technique; the workmanship is remarkable throughout, the mere cleverness at times almost obtrusive; it is simply the sacrifice of ideality to reality.

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Musically speaking, the composer has in the finale passed in review all the materials used in the foregoing sections, and although he has ample precedent to warrant this proceeding, I do not think the work as a whole is the gainer thereby. It can hardly be said that the lack of continuity is compensated for by the additional variety, but in the face of such ample evidence of poetical inspiration and consummate musicianship as are exemplified in this symphony, to cavil at such details were perhaps hypercritical. The work is well able to hold its own with any of its foreign rivals, and is, without doubt, one of the strongest specimens of English orchestral art extant.

As I have said, the concert at which the symphony was first produced was one of a series which its composer endeavoured to permanently establish in London under the title of the "Saturday Orchestral Concerts"; and this entirely on his own resources. His friend and patron, Lord Dudley, had some six months previously been stricken by paralysis, from which he never altogether recovered, and from which he died not long afterwards. His having, so to speak, watched over Cowen's career from childhood, was only one of the

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causes of their mutual attachment. There existed between them the strongest sympathy and friendship, and "of all intellectual friendships none are so beautiful as those which exist between old and ripe men and their younger brethren in science or literature or art." So says Hamerton; and true indeed it is. It is one of the comforting things of this life to notice that, of all artists who have attained eminence in their art, there are few who have been so unfortunate as not to find sooner or later the experienced, kindly and sympathetic friend whom they one and all seek, and who has so much in his power, if not directly by substantial aid, indirectly by kindly and discreet encouragement. When in the case of Lord Dudley we add that he sought the companionship of his young friend, 'making music' with him, walking and driving with him, and listening to all his plans, ideas, and hopes for the future, it can be imagined how deeply the young artist felt his loss.

Perhaps in an undertaking such as that into which he had now entered the absence of his friend made itself more strongly felt than ever, for he could and would have been of enormous assistance. But that the ultimate result would

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have differed is not likely. Cowen took up a fight which had already been well fought by most able champions, and under which each had succumbed—the battle to successfully establish orchestral concerts in London. It will be readily granted that he had everything in his favour—the energy and perseverance of youth, the artistic culture, and the interest which was already centred around him as one of the coming representative English musicians. Again, it was thought that the chief reason of failure on the part of his predecessors had been a lack of maintenance of a sufficiently high standard. This he proved was not so. Enough, that if able to withstand the demand made upon his endurance, he was not in a position to withstand that made on his pocket, and was at last obliged to relinquish the scheme, and acknowledge financial defeat. Nevertheless, this series, short as it was, will always be remembered by musicians from its connection with two works, each in its way so typical of its composer as "The Scandinavian Symphony" and the orchestral suite entitled "The Language of Flowers."

Highly representative of his lighter vein, the suite has, for delicacy and fancy, no superior in English music. Composed as it was as a relief

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from the gravity of the more serious compositions played at his orchestral concerts, it is probable that its composer expected little more from it than the fulfilment of its purpose. Charmed by its grace and fancy, its hearers welcomed it enthusiastically from its first hearing; while to-day I suppose there is not an orchestral society in England that does not include it in its *repertoire*, and frequently perform it.

How pretty the idea! The first movement, entitled "Daisy," superscribed with Burns's expressive line,

"Wee modest crimson-tipped flower;"

the "Lilac," expressing the first emotions of love:

"I dreamed that love
Should steal upon the heart like summer dawn—
Soft, gradual;"

the fascination of the "Fern," with its waywardness and freshness of spirit; "Columbine," the emblem of folly; the elegant and graceful "Yellow Jasmine"; and the return of happiness exemplified by the "Lily of the Valley";—each is more charming than its companion. Like Herrick, 'he knows and loves his dear blossoms well;' like him, "his pages breathe their clear and innocent perfumes, and are beautiful with the

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chaste beauty of their colour, just as they carry with them something of the sweetness and simplicity of maidenhood itself." It is well done.

There now came a sacred cantata for the Norwich Festival, entitled "St. Ursula," a "Sinfonietta" for the Philharmonic Society, and an overture entitled "Niagara," which had but one hearing—at the Crystal Palace—and which is chiefly remarkable for its composer having later on used the principal motives contained in it for the first movement of his Fifth Symphony.

In "St. Ursula" we have perhaps the first of a series of cantatas which in the opinion of some constitutes the chief contribution on the part of this musician to modern English art.

His choice of a legendary subject for his next important work following the Scandinavian Symphony rather bears out the view which I expressed on this point in discussing that work. The legend of the Martyr of Cologne and her numerous companions is fairly familiar, and not without interest both romantic and pathetic. Without repeating it here, it will be sufficient to say that the scenes chosen by the librettist (Mr. Francillon) were, first, the decision of Ursula; second, the departure of the fleet; and third, the massacre; and that the plot, if it has weaknesses,

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contains situations which are not without suggestiveness to the musician. Perceiving that the chief interest in the action is centred upon the heavenly message sent to Ursula, he accordingly, in his "Vision of Ursula," strikes the keynote of the whole work. As regards the music itself, it is in many respects remarkable. Its spirit is lofty, its purpose definite, and its *genre* eminently modern. There is a use of representative themes which by some would be thought excessive, as would the 'colour' which has been obtained in various instances more by detail of technique—such as unorthodox harmonic treatment and melodic eccentricity—than by absolute definiteness of conception. Parts of the work are conventional; parts of it are also highly original; and here, as in all else from the same pen, the handling of the orchestra is always good, and at times masterly.

In the commencement of '82 we find the composer once more off on his travels, but this time with a definite artistic purpose; the occasion being that of the first performance in Vienna, under Hans Richter, of the Scandinavian Symphony. It was successful in the highest degree, and from this time forward made its way into the programmes of all the principal Continental

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concerts. On two occasions of its performance, at Budapesth and Stuttgart—the composer himself conducted it. Of his other productions at this time I must mention a suite for strings entitled "In the Olden Time," in addition to which this year saw the commencement of a series of song-albums which have come to us from time to time, and which are representative of his lyrical faculty in a very high degree.

In the *Musical Times* of October 1882 there is the following paragraph: "In December 1880 we gave an account of the formation of the Scottish Musical Society, and we now find that at a meeting of the Society held in Glasgow on the 6th ult.—Mr. James Campbell of Tillichewan, Chairman of the Glasgow Committee, presiding—it was unanimously resolved to appoint Mr. Frederic H. Cowen Principal of the Scottish Academy of Music which the Society is taking steps to establish." It concludes with the hearty congratulation of the authorities of the Academy upon the choice they had made. Happily—I use the expression advisedly—the scheme fell through for lack of funds. Pray do not misunderstand me: I have not the slightest doubt it would have been an excellent thing—for Scotland, but not for our friend. If there be

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one thing more than another against which a composer should guard, it is drudgery. You may say: "There is drudgery in everything, that nine-tenths of all art is drudgery." I grant it. But it only assures me the more that by the extinction of that sole remaining tenth which is not drudgery, the light of inspiration will in most cases flicker and die. There are men—I can point to one illustrious case in point—who can combine the art of creation with that of instruction without any apparent harm to themselves, but again that only proves my rule; and I go so far as to say that if this project had been carried out, entailing as it did enforced absence from his home for the greater part of the year, neither the quality nor quantity of the work which he has since put out would have been what it is.

I have already touched upon our artist's love of Nature—of his love for the wildness of Scandinavia, the snow-clad ranges of Switzerland, the soporific yet suggestive atmosphere of Italy. His love of the physical life is little less than his love for the intellectual. There can, I think, be no doubt that the more sensitive and contemplative study of the fine arts, as well as the power of creation, is carried to a far

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greater pitch of perfection by the man who is a student of Nature, and who has the power of absorbing the stimulating influence which she exerts. Goethe, we know, revelled in all kinds of physical exercise; Wordsworth was an enthusiastic pedestrian; and Henri Thoreau one of Nature's truest lovers. I will not say that Nature is reciprocative, nor that, in the words of Wordsworth, she "never did betray the heart that loved her," but I do say that it is in such hours of 'lovely idleness' as are spent in her presence that thoughts, great and small, definite and indefinite, will appear and disappear, and that they it is that constitute the material from out which are fashioned the greatest artistic creations. Then the mind which has been performing what we may term unconscious cerebration will, when the artist calls upon it so to do, yield its hidden treasures, and its activity in so doing will be no less remarkable than was its previous lethargy.

In the case of this musician, his 'dreamful ease' has always been followed by a splendid activity. For example, at this time the result of a holiday thus spent in the summer of '83, partly at Dorking, partly on the fair reaches of Henley, was a number of beautiful songs, and

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no less a work than his Fourth Symphony in B♭ Minor; in every way a worthy successor to his Third.

It is commonly termed "The Welsh Symphony," and the composer owns to the expression in it of some impressions received by him when on a visit to North Wales, two years previously. The critic of the *Athenæum*, writing on the work after its first performance, gave vent to the following opinion: "The composer has affixed no name to the new work; but the annotator of the Philharmonic programme has chosen to call it the Welsh or Cambrian Symphony. Mr. Cowen has declined to christen his piece, and the annotator would certainly have done well to follow his example, because any national characteristics which the new symphony possesses are decidedly Scotch rather than Welsh."

Now, although I do not feel inclined to go so far as to agree *in toto* with this statement, I feel disposed to grant that the melody of the first sixteen bars of the trio contained in the scherzo has, by the avoidance of the fourth degree of the scale and the rare use of the seventh, a semblance of being constructed on the old pentatonic series, which we know was

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the scale of the ancient Scotch music, which the Welsh people would have none of. Their national harp had our complete diatonic scale; consequently their music was much more artistic than that of Scotland.

Again, the closes used throughout what we may term the characteristic melodic portions also go to justify the critic's remarks. Against this we must put the fact that the ordinary ear is very much more quick to discern the characteristics of Scotch music than those of the Welsh, and that as a matter of fact many would not know a Welsh melody as national music when they heard it. It is really difficult to say definitely what are the actual and distinguishing technical features of Welsh music, inasmuch as it is not barbaric, and has, as I have before said, the perfect diatonic scale. Many of the melodies employed in the symphony are of a simple primitiveness, and to my mind admirably answer their purpose.

The scherzo and finale are undoubtedly the best movements of the work, the former in portions quite reminiscent of Schubert in its delicacy, and the latter containing some of the finest instrumental writing that its composer has ever given to us.

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In the two or three years following this the musician was more than usually productive, but from among the works which emanated from him during that time it will be sufficient if we consider "The Sleeping Beauty," his oratorio "Ruth," and an Overture in D Minor.

The first-named cantata is one of the most popular of his works. It was written specially for the Birmingham Festival, and produced there in August '85. The story of the "Sleeping Beauty" is familiar to every one, and Mr. Hueffer the librettist, in adapting it for musical treatment, has divided the action into three scenes, with a prologue; the four specified characters being the Princess, the Wicked Fay, the Prince, and the King. In the Prologue we have of course the christening of the infant Princess and the bestowal of gifts by the friendly fays, together with the curse of the Wicked Fay, who has not been invited to the festivities. The composer throughout has adopted very thoroughly the method of representative themes; in fact, this work is more than any other remarkable on that score. In the course of the Prologue he announces four principal motives: firstly, one which is typical of the feast given by the King; this is

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followed by the 'blessing' theme, when we have a very notable phrase in the orchestra, which is a typical 'love-motive'; and finally the 'maledictory' theme. This will be sufficient to show the composer's strict adherence to the system. Throughout the work he shows consummate skill in handling this thematic material. The typical phrases are not used merely as a means of announcement of the characters, nor are they labels; they thoroughly carry out Wagner's theory of developing themes according to their respective tendencies, by which we get the principal mental moods in definite thematic shapes before us.

I do not think Cowen has written anything more melodic, elegant, or of more sustained musical interest, especially in the accompaniments, than this fairy cantata. It lends itself fully to his graceful fancy, it makes no great demand upon the dramatic faculty, and is altogether a subject thoroughly calculated to bring out his strong points. It is not without its blemishes; for instance, a certain sacrifice of vocal niceties to orchestral effect, or ineffective anti-climaxes—as, for example, in the soprano solo, "Whither away, my heart?"

It was given in Paris, under the conduct of

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the composer himself, to an accompaniment of two pianos, double string quartette, and harp, by the "Concordia." That it was, even under such disadvantage, successful, is sufficient proof of the quality of the music.

The Overture in D Minor, to which I have alluded, was written for the opening of the Liverpool Exhibition. It is in the stereotyped pattern of overtures in general, opening with an *Adagio maestoso*, followed by an *Allegro molto vivace*. Much of the development is carried out with what Mr. Barry aptly calls "true Weberian freedom," not unbecoming to the pupil of Weber's favourite pupil. After the development of his third 'subject,' the composer has brought in a chorale which was written by the late Prince Consort. It appears here somewhat re-harmonised. The Overture is an admirable work in its way, and although it was done great injustice to on the occasion of the opening ceremony of the Exhibition, it received an excellent rendering and much commendation on its production in London by Hans Richter in May 1886.

There is little but work to record in Cowen's life at this time. Symphony followed cantata, as overture followed song; and when one looks

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at the list of work turned out, it seems truly wonderful that it can have been done without absolute mental exhaustion. From composing, his only relaxation was composing. Writing a song he looked upon as a rollicking way of passing the time after writing a symphony. And yet most of the work is deliberate, carefully thought out, and delicately done. He evidently knows the range of his own powers, and he keeps within them—a no small and distinguishing feature of the mature artist.

We now come to the last important orchestral work, the Symphony No. 5, produced in 1887 at Cambridge by the University Musical Society, and immediately afterwards by Richter in London, to whom it is dedicated. Now, I shall come to the point at once, and say that as, up to the present time, it is the last, so it is the best of the five symphonies. It has no title, such as had its predecessors. There is no programme—nothing national, no picture. It is pure abstract music, every bit as much so as is Beethoven's "Seventh." The field is limitless, and the composer has nothing to consult save his own fancy and the laws of music. The annotator of the Richter programmes came to the conclusion that this Symphony in F, com-

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posed "during the gloomiest part of the gloomiest winter on record, expresses disgust at the long continuance of the foulest weather, and a vigorous determination to withstand it." Its tone is undoubtedly sombre, but the music is greater, the feeling deeper, the whole ring truer than we have had before. Grace and elegance, flowing melody, and variety and charm of orchestral effect: these we have always had, and these we now look for as a matter of course; but the true and earnest pathos of the *adagio* movement of this symphony is a surprise to us. This is the more effective, coming as it does after the eminently Cowenesque (if I may use the expression) *allegretto*. Here, his annotator admits, there is not a trace of "foul weather"; it is, as he says, like the personification of some aërial being—perhaps an "airy fairy Lilian"—who has gladdened his hearth and home. The picturesqueness, the delicacy, the musical *savoir faire* are all his own. Then comes the beautiful "Adagio espressivo." It opens with five preludial bars given to violins, violas, and bassoons, followed by a phrase which is positively Chopinesque. Dismiss it as I may, it brings to my mind Chopin as he reveals himself to us in his 13th Prelude in F Sharp. I do not mean to say

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there is either textual or actual similitude. It is in the spirit rather than the letter. But there it is, to my thinking. We then have a theme based upon the first five bars prelude. This continues until a return to the principal subject is made, in this instance sustained by the horn and clarionet, with a running accompaniment on the part of the violas and 'cellos. A brief allusion to the preludial theme interrupts us once more, until the lovely subject in D major returns again, presented to us by the clarionet, and accompanied by a figure of semiquaver triplets on the violins. And so we are led on until the final cadence, which is a fit conclusion to so beautiful a movement, the effect of the tonic D being preceded by the chord of F sharp minor being as beautiful as it is original.

Nothing would be more enjoyable than to go in like manner through each of the movements of this symphony, but space forbids, and I have only allowed myself to do so in this instance on account of the comparative unfamiliarity of the work, and of its being the latest and most ambitious effort of the composer in the field of orchestral music. I am one of those who like him better here than elsewhere.

And that brings me to "Ruth," the only

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oratorio from his pen. I can do little more than record it, as I have a most important period of his career awaiting my attention, and one which will bear of little curtailment.

In adapting the story of Ruth for musical treatment, the librettist had two courses open to him; that is to say, he was at liberty to deal with the subject either narratively or dramatically. He chose the latter mode, "recognising not only its greater capacity for inspiring interest, but also the fitness of the tale for that particular mode of treatment." Handel, we know, in such works as "Samson," "Judas Maccabæus," and "Jephtha," felt so keenly the dramatic interest in his subject as actually to write in his scores stage directions. The benefits of so doing are not clear, for unless the directions are such as can be adequately illustrated by musical means, they are worse than useless. To my own thinking, oratorio, when it leaves the epic for the dramatic, becomes a bastard creation. It is neither drama nor oratorio, for surely the essence of oratorio should be devotion? If we must have sacred drama, I would that it were in the form of Saint-Saën's great work, "Samson et Delila." But into the discussion of so weighty a question it would be out of place to enter

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here. That the entry into the domain of sacred music by a composer, whose prominent characteristics had hitherto been grace of style and delicate fancy rather than dignity and breadth, should have been watched with great interest is not surprising. True, in "Ruth" the sacred element is relegated to a secondary place, and for that reason we are justified in looking for more of the 'graphic' than of the 'devotional' in the music. For instance, in the first scene, the musical representation of the caravan winding its way from the land of Moab to Israel is excellent. And that the composer should excel in such musical depiction was to be expected, for he had already given proofs of his strength in this direction. All credit be it then to the librettist for so gauging the strength of his musician, and placing before him scenes calculated to bring into prominence his individual faculties. Indeed, one may search the Scriptures and not find a subject so in harmony with his delicate gifts as is this pastoral idyll of "Ruth." The composer has once more had recourse to leading motives, although here it is in no way excessive. There are in the work choruses which in their vigour and directness surprise us, and there is the

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same charm of thought, fancy, and design which usually adorn his art. On the other hand, if we demand for the perfect oratorio a plentiful indulgence in and use of counterpoint, fugue, and polyphonic imitation, such as is exemplified in the greatest oratorios, we shall assuredly be obliged to confess that from them "Ruth" is a thing apart. Time alone can decide its ultimate position.

It forms a portion of the librettist's plan to introduce in the first scene of the second part, a dance of gleaners with a chorus of reapers, and to the insertion of this musically some critics have objected. But however unusual the strains of this dance may have sounded in the venerable aisles of Worcester Cathedral, both librettist and composer have weighty and ample precedent, and therefore, I take it, sufficient justification for its introduction.

Finally, while it must be admitted that light music prevails in "Ruth" to a somewhat unusual extent, it must not be forgotten that in this the composer is consistent with the requirements of the story, and that it would have been manifestly out of place and artistically incorrect to have illustrated those lighter portions of the act with music of a religious and devotional

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kind. Moreover, it must be contended in the composer's favour that in the final chorus of the harvest scene, where the people, remembering full well their sufferings from famine in the past, pour forth their thanks for their present plenitude, the music is fervent and impressive, and that such airs as Ruth's "Be of good comfort" and "Intreat me not to leave thee," are thoroughly beautiful and truly earnest. The only question I would hazard is that whether, seeing that "Ruth," although based on a Scriptural subject, is not strictly speaking religious, it would not have been more in justice to the work itself to have discarded the term "dramatic oratorio," and substituted that of "a Biblical cantata."

We have now viewed our musician in the light of pianist and of composer. There is yet another phase of his art in which he has undoubtedly made his mark. I refer to that of the conductor. Generally speaking, composers are not the material from which the best conductors are made. Mendelssohn, with his fine intelligence and ready nerve, proved himself an exception. On the other hand, Beethoven, Schumann, Dvorak, are prominent examples of the rule.

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Cowen, if he had no other claim to distinction in this branch of music, has in his prodigious memory a strong claim upon the consideration of musicians, for whatever may be said for or against conducting from memory, there can be no gainsaying the fact that to be able to recollect every *nuance*, every change of *tempo*, the entries of the various instruments, in a long and complicated work, is to the conductor himself an enormous advantage, leaving him free as it does to devote his attention to the attainment of a perfect realisation of the composer's meaning. Of all branches of the art this most depends upon experience. Given this latter, and a fine musical organisation, we should have a good conductor. By good I do not mean perfect, for the realisation of that quality necessitates a genius for the work. This is possessed by few indeed, and it is in such men as Mottl, Richter, Lamoureux, Manns, and Sullivan that we realise the vast gulf which lies between the fact of accomplishing well and excelling in this difficult art. I should mention that Cowen was in 1880 appointed conductor of the Promenade Concerts at Covent Garden. This, with his wide experience gained in connection with Mapleson's Opera Company

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and numerous orchestral concerts, had in some degree fitted him to undertake the post of conductor of the London Philharmonic Society's concerts, which on the retirement of Sir Arthur Sullivan was offered to him. To follow in the footsteps of such men as Mendelssohn, Moscheles, Wagner, Costa, and Sterndale Bennett, is an honour; and no surer proof of the estimation in which Cowen as a musician was held could have been given than his appointment to the post of conductor of this society.

Encouraged by this practical expression of his value, he entered his name as a candidate for the Principalship of the Royal Academy of Music, just rendered vacant by the death of Sir George Macfarren. With what result was never to be proved, for only a few days after sending in his name he received an offer to undertake the musical direction of the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition. Here was a matter for much consideration. On the one hand his love of travel and desire to see and know as much of the world as possible, urged him to close with it. On the other, the enforced absence for the greater part of a year both from home and from his work, together

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with the thousand and one details which there would be to arrange, inclined him to refuse it. In fact, he did in the first instance refuse it on the terms offered, naming at the same time the sum which would cause him to change his mind. The committee in reply came so near to his figure that he finally accepted, and the honorarium arranged reached the unprecedented sum of £5000.

Before leaving England he composed "A Song of Thanksgiving" for chorus and orchestra specially for the opening of the Exhibition, and with the exception of the two last concerts conducted his first season at the Philharmonic. In May of that year (1888) he sailed in the Orient steamer *Austral* for Melbourne.

Before touching upon his experiences in the colony I would draw the attention of English readers to the fact that the scheme put forward by the committee of the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition was in many respects absolutely unique. Melbourne had been hitherto comparatively barren of good orchestral music. The Government therefore determined to make the series of concerts somewhat of a musical education in addition to being a pleasure to the people. With this object in view, they spared

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no cost (the musical expenses alone amounting to some £30,000), gathered their resources not only from the neighbouring colonies of New South Wales, Queensland, New Zealand, &c., but also from England, and got together an excellent orchestra of seventy players and a choir of some seven hundred voices. It will be seen from this that when our kith and kin of the Antipodes undertake a task of this kind, they do it well, and the scale upon which everything connected with the Exhibition was designed and carried out was at once an honour to musical art and a credit to the colony.

On his arrival in Melbourne, Cowen was fêted on all sides. Deputations, banquets, and hospitalities of every kind were poured in upon him. The people were enthusiastic, and spared neither trouble nor expense to do honour to the musician whom they had chosen. Let us hear what he himself writes on his arrival in Melbourne:

"I am sending you some newspapers which will show you some of my doings (everything is chronicled, even if I go to a concert), but I will try to give you some idea myself of all I have gone through in these few days. You will read

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of the deputations which came on board to meet me on my arrival; we were then taken up direct to Melbourne in a special launch and brought to the hotel. On Saturday I received more deputations and visits, and in the evening we went to a concert in the Town Hall given for Madeline Schiller's benefit. The Governor and Lady Loch were there, and I was introduced to them. We afterwards went to the 'Yorick' Club (the local 'Savage'), and were 'christened.' . . . .

"On Sunday we went for a long drive, and in the evening I dined quietly at the Governor's. On Monday the Mayor came to call, and in the afternoon there was his official welcome in the Town Hall."

He then goes on to say: "Last night I had my first rehearsal with the choir. They received me very cordially, and in the end I went through the ordeal of shaking hands with every member present—I suppose some five hundred. They have good voices, and I have great hopes of their acquitting themselves well. Of course there are sub-conductors (two), as I cannot be present at all rehearsals. Besides all this, there have been introductions, lunches, etc., so that, as I said, we have been in a constant whirl from morning till night. Every one is most hospitable and

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kind, and they seem anxious to do all they can to make our stay pleasant."

From this we gain some idea of the reception held out to him. It may have had its irksome side, but to the recipient it could not have been but gratifying in a very high degree.

Some idea of the actual accomplishment by the conductor will be obtained when I mention that the usual week's work consisted of no less than ten orchestral concerts and a performance of some oratorio or cantata. The programmes comprised almost every standard symphony (some of them many times repeated), every overture of note, besides a great many modern novelties of English and Continental composers. The public, though at first somewhat fearful of too much serious music, very soon became enthusiastic about it, and the concerts were crowded from day to day. To say that he experienced no opposition would be incorrect, but this is an instance where statistics may be taken as conclusive proof. To arrive at such a proof, the conductor took a plebiscite when midway through his season, which resulted in the following works receiving the highest number of votes. Beethoven's "Pastoral Symphony," Wagner's "Tannhäuser" Overture, Handel's

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"Largo," Liszt's "First Rhapsody," and Wagner's "Rienzi" Overture; a selection which, as he himself says, would do honour to any community. In speaking of this period of his life, the composer has often related to me incidents which, having a humorous side, stand out prominently as a relief against the very incessant and arduous work which went to make up his daily life. There are still people in this country, though they are by no means so numerous as they were, who at the mention of the word Australian, conjure vividly before them pictures of red flannel shirts, tin billies, kangaroos, and aborigines. The mere relation therefore of the following little incident, as an incident, will in some measure go to prove the rarity of such occurrences in the excessively civilised and handsome city of Melbourne. Let me give it exactly as he told it to me: "In the concert-hall one day my attention was drawn by our leader to a man, evidently from the bush, seated calmly in the front row, enjoying the music, with his eyes shut and his arms folded complacently as he leaned back. He had taken off his boots and placed them neatly together on the floor beside him, and with his yellow stockings made a

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picture such as I have never before seen at a place of entertainment." Had such a thing as this been at all usual, does it not stand to reason that it would not have occurred to the leader to call his conductor's attention to it? Knowing as I do the material comforts of Melbourne, the advanced state of the civilisation, the beauty of the buildings, the lovely climate and the great enlightenment of the colonial generally, I marvel at some remarks which are even now in this great and intellectual city of London made by persons to whose sayings one is wont to pay attention. I do not say that in the fine arts they are our equals, but there can be no doubt that in many other ways they are our equals, if not our superiors.

Neither is every other man in Australia a tender of sheep, though it is to the squatter 'up country' that the advanced state of the cities is in no small degree due. But even the squatters attended the Exhibition concerts—and not only attended them, but criticised both performances and the music. As a specimen of criticism the following heard during a performance of "Ruth," is somewhat diverting:—

Squatter to his friend—also a friend of the composer: "I say, old man, it reminds me of

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weaning time with my sheep: first the old ewe (contralto) gets up and says Baa! then the old ram (tenor) replies Baa! Baa! then all the lambs behind the fences (the choir) cry Baa! Baa! Baa! You tell Cowen to come out to my place, and I will show him how musical the sheep are."

I will now give a few figures in connection with the Exhibition which will, I think, bear me out in the view I have taken of this enterprise. The charges for admission to the Grand Choral Concerts were uniformly as follows: reserved seats, four shillings; unreserved, two and sixpence; galleries and back seats, one shilling. The other concerts were mostly free, small charges being made on special occasions only. The number of visitors who attended the concerts was as nearly as could be ascertained about half a million. Of the Choral works performed, "Ruth" received five performances, the average receipts of each being £310. "The Messiah," four performances, each averaging £271. "Elijah," four performances, each averaging £257. The "Creation," two performances, average, £284; "The Golden Legend," two performances, average, £200, "The Sleeping Beauty," two performances, averaging £129.

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At the Orchestral Concerts the number of symphonies given was 35, Overtures, 91, miscellaneous pieces, 95, concertos, 14, and operatic selections, 17.

These figures will, I think, convey some idea of the scale upon which the musical arrangements were carried out.

It would not be right to pass over the farewell performance of "Ruth" in Melbourne, for it was the scene of an ovation such as has seldom fallen to the lot of any musician. Writing of it, he says: "I was the recipient of such enthusiasm as I have never seen in a concert room. After the performance I was pelted with flowers, and received some handsome floral trophies; then they cheered and the orchestra and choir struck up, 'Auld Lang Syne,' in which the audience joined. All the ladies of the choir then took off their blue and red sashes and waved them in the air, cheering for quite ten minutes, I should think. I was quite overcome by it all."

Frequent longings to get back are now conspicuous in his letters, but he had already received and accepted a gratifying offer to take his orchestra to Sydney for a period of ten days to give a series of twelve or fourteen concerts.

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For a description of his visit to the capital of New South Wales, I cannot do better than quote from his own letter, written from Melbourne on his return. "I am back again from my trip to New South Wales, which was very enjoyable, and which has done me a great deal of good. We started on Monday the 8th, by the afternoon express, reaching Sydney at twelve o'clock on Tuesday. The Governor had his saloon carriage as far as the frontier, and from thence Lord Carrington sent his. On arriving in Sydney, we drove to Government House (with out-riders, etc.), lunched there, and started again at five o'clock for Katoomba, where we slept. On Wednesday we left Katoomba at ten o'clock, travelled by train for two hours through charming country, and down the celebrated zig-zag railway to Tarana, and from there we had a drive of nearly six hours to the Yenolan Caves, picnicing on the way. The drive was mostly through the bush, and gave me a good idea of Australia in general, with its parrots flying about, wallaby (a small kind of kangaroo), laughing jackasses (these are birds, not animals), etc. At the Caves, the whole household (there is nothing but the hotel there) turned out to

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give the Governor three cheers, and the place was prettily decorated with ferns and flowers, which grow all around in profusion. Thursday we spent in visiting the Caves, and very wonderful they are. The stalactite formations are very curious and beautiful and there are no two caves alike. . . . We left again on Friday at 12.30. and had another lovely drive of five hours to Mount Victoria, through the Blue Mountains and amidst some of the most charming scenery I have ever beheld. From Mount Victoria, we took the train back to Katoomba, where we slept, and on Saturday morning we had a special train to Sydney and stayed at Government House until Monday.

"Sydney itself is a charming place, most beautifully situated; the celebrated harbour does not belie its reputation, and is really beautiful, reminding me somewhat of Christiania and Stockholm. One can want nothing prettier than the view from Government House, with the harbour and ships, the surrounding hills and semi-tropical vegetation. On Saturday evening, the profession gave me a banquet, and on Sunday afternoon we went for a steam up the harbour. On Monday, at five, we left, driving to the

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station in a carriage with four horses and postillions (as we did on arrival)."

Before finally leaving Melbourne, Cowen gave a farewell orchestral concert for the benefit of the hospitals, by which a considerable sum was realised. This was his leave-taking of the Victorian capital, but the Colonials had not yet done with him, for at Adelaide (whence he sailed) he was pressed to conduct a performance of the "Sleeping Beauty." That over he embarked, and arrived in England just in time to conduct the second Philharmonic Concert of that season.

His enforced cessation from composition had been hard for him to bear, and once again settled down in London, he set to work on a cantata, "St. John's Eve," which was first performed at the Crystal Palace in December of that year. That finished, he bethought himself of the commission which Carl Rosa had given him the year before, to write an opera for his company. This is the last important work which we have to consider. To attempt to arrive at the place which it will eventually occupy in the world of opera, would be futile. Moreover, from it alone it is impossible to say whether its composer is destined in this branch of composition to obtain the distinction which

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as a writer in other art forms is his. If we look for originality in "Thorgrim," we find it. Scholarship, refinement, melodic and harmonic power, dramatic ability, all of these in a greater or lesser degree we have. "Thorgrim" is in more senses than one a masterly work. Those temptations which beset the composer of lyric drama to write down to the level of the so-called popular taste, have been strenuously and well withstood, although sometimes, perhaps, at a sacrifice to beauty. Those who look for reminiscences of other operas will find but few, while the finale of the first act astonishes those who know the composer well. To reach in music the highest emotional effect, has been possible to few musicians, and to do this, something more than a great ambition, a perfect scholarship, and wide experience is necessary. In grand opera we demand that this result be achieved. It can and has been effected by both simplicity and complexity of means—generally the former method has been productive of the greater results. Beyond all else it is necessary that the composer be in complete sympathy with his libretto, and it seems to me the librettist acted wisely when he chose this episode in the ancient Icelandic Saga,

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"Viglund the Fair," as his foundation. He was justified in assuming these grim legends of the North to have absorbing interest for this musician, and his choice of subject once granted, his handling of it has power, and interest, and poetic beauty. But to deal musically with such a subject, in a spirit such as shall be in sympathy with our modern opera, is a task of vast difficulty, involving a somewhat different procedure than that adopted in the symphonic expression of mere impressions. For its successful achievement, the composer must combine a fine impressibility with a vigorous dramatic faculty. The resultant of this combination then requires an artistic restraint no less fully developed than either of its component parts. But above all, what we demand in serious opera is the human-emotional element. Without human interest, of what use leit-motives? They cannot be merely descriptive of character or feeling, they must be pure essence of it. Could anything be more heartfelt of Carmen's tragic end than the motive, which, being born of his feeling for her, Bizet has given us as a type of it? It is for this human element that one seeks in "Thorgrim." The composition of symphony, of oratorio, of cantata or sonata, may stand

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without it, but of grand opera it is the essence. Latency is no unfamiliar feature of it, and by musicians who have afterwards proved themselves to possess it in the highest degree, it has not been found for the seeking. That is why I say it is impossible to accurately gauge the position of Frederic Cowen as a composer of Grand Opera, and that it will not be possible to do so until we have further opportunity of and a wider field for search. The temptation in "Thorgrim" to allow the descriptive element and the element of 'colour' to predominate was no light one, and one which, although leading to fatal results, there is excuse to be found for. Nevertheless, the interest caused by this important effort in the field of English Opera has raised to a very high degree, hopes for the future success of, and absolute achievement by, its composer in this form of art.

Some will say that he has been unwise in seeking to be the pioneer of English Opera in Italy. Certainly "Signa" has up to this present been singularly unfortunate. Written originally for the Royal English Opera, it was by the untoward fate of the establishment doomed to enshelvement *sine die*. Then it was that the composer approached the impresario of

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the Carlo Felice Theatre in Genoa and came to an arrangement by which in the garb of an Italian translation it was first to see the light in the Superb city. Now within the last week the news has come that such a thing is to be thought of no longer. The reasons given are various. But to anyone possessed of experience in things theatrical in Italy the news comes by no means as a surprise. Moreover it is an open question whether in this instance, fortune—though she may use a hard way of showing it—is not bestowing her favour upon the composer. Certain it is that of all the audiences in Italy, that in Genoa is least calculated to be in sympathy with or to dismiss the prejudice against, the work of an "Inglese" in this direction. Personally I confess to cherishing the hope that "Signa" may yet return to us, and first see the light in the country, if not in the city, of its birth.

There now remains but one aspect in which to view this composer, before taking leave of him. He is perhaps to a greater extent than any of his colleagues a song writer. When I say this, I have not in my mind "The Better Land," neither have I lingering in my ears the strains of "It was a Dream" of "The Chimney

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Corner." Facile as these undoubtedly are, they but represent the lower grade of his facility in this branch of his art. If we would truly gauge his lyric gift it is by the contemplation of such beautiful examples as "Snowflakes," "A Song of Morning," "Is my Lover on the Sea?" that we shall arrive at the most satisfactory conclusion. They are truly beautiful specimens of their kind. Their exquisite refinement, sincerity of feeling, and minuteness of detail make of them works of more than transient interest. His vocal knack is quite happy, and his accompaniments are sometimes in themselves things of beauty. It is here that he seems to me to write for the mere delight of writing. He is no more a follower of Brahms or of Loewe, than he is a disciple of Schubert or of Franz. He is simply himself. All that he need beware of is lest in his keen appreciation of the value of sentiment he drifts within the confines of sentimentality. Here he has evidently no wish to be, before all else, what we, for want of a better term, call 'original.' At all events not wildly so. Again, his choice of words is no less happy than his expression of them, and by nothing more than by his power of selection does he show how truly he possesses the faculty of self-

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criticism. He has no highly developed dramatic gift, but he can surround such lyrics as Dante Rossetti's "A Little While" with just the right atmosphere.

But it is in the musical expression of Nature that he is quite excellent. For example, he has never been more completely successful than when in his "Song of Morning" he has expressed

> *"How faintly from the meadow floats*
> *The early fragrance of the cuckoo flower."*

To my mind he has given us quite the best setting of the oft-set "Birthday" lyric of Christina Rossetti, while for pathos he has never surpassed the music to Thomas Moore's "At the Mid Hour of Night."

In these days of Symphonies from boys and girls and Masses from musical fledglings, it is indeed refreshing to find a duly matured musician giving his earnest attention to and bestowing his matured powers upon this miniature work. We have so much of attempt—so little of realisation. Let us beware then lest in our quest for serious art we mistake the shadow for the substance, and welcome some life-size "immorality of sound," simply

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because it is life-size, in the place of true art because it is in miniature. Frederic Cowen has enriched the world of pure song. For such enrichment alone, if for nought else, he is worthy of our most sincere regard—our most heartfelt gratitude. He is none the less for it a symphonist. He is young yet, and though his greatest work is probably to come, absolute achievement is none the less his at this present. Some of us, I think, do not recognise the true philosophy of appreciating what is actually accomplished for itself, preferring rather to value it as a promise of futurity rather than as a good gift of actuality. This in music, as in the sister arts, is to be deplored. And so it is that because they represent what is very near to a truth, rather than for their value as a promise for his future career as a poet, we can forgive Mr. Cowen the composition of some lines which he has entitled,

IMPROMPTU ON A "RISING ENGLISH COMPOSER."

He was born half a century after Mozart
On the very same day of the year,
And this singular fact was a source of great joy
To the Press, who exclaimed, "A good omen! The boy
Will most certainly make a career!"

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FREDERIC HYMEN COWEN

At the great age of four he could play all the tunes
Which he heard on the organs by ear,
And at ten he composed such a beautiful song
That they said, "We must praise him, for surely ere long
He will make an unheard-of career."

At twenty a symphony which he composed
With delight drove musicians quite wild—
So the Press took him up: "The work shows signs of haste
But it promises well—and we've not the bad taste
To discourage this talented child."

At thirty an opera came from his pen,
And to hear it all Londoners ran—
Again were the critics most kind: "We are glad
To be able to state the work's really not bad;
He's a promising, rising young man!"

At forty, at fifty, at sixty, more works
Were produced with enormous success,
And they gained for him everywhere money and fame—
"We are so pleased to see that he's making a name
For himself by degrees"—said the Press.

At seventy, one more great work he composed,
And it took the whole world by surprise—
The critics were now quite enraptured: "In truth
He will do something yet, will this promising youth,
If thus fast he continues to rise."

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At eighty he died; then with sorrow they spoke
Of the loss which all Europe befell,
And expressed themselves thus: "It is sad, we must say,
That a talent so great should be taken away
At a time when it promised so well!"

With which we say 'Farewell.'

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C. Hubert H. Parry

From a Photograph by Elliott & Fry

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CHARLES HUBERT HASTINGS PARRY.

It is, I believe, in Dr. Hubert Parry that the hopes of many who look for a truly "English" music, are more especially centred. He is their mainstay and their guide, and, if at one time he lacked recognition, he does so no longer. He has by his supply succeeded in creating something like a spirited demand. In fact he is now nothing so much as in requisition, and he is the cause of unbounded enthusiasm. One of his young admirers was moved some few weeks back to thus express himself in the columns of a musical periodical: "At the appropriate moment our pioneer has arisen. In Dr. Parry we have a composer of true genius, of wide experience, and of uncompromising sincerity, who from the beginning of his career has devoted himself to the work of liberation. By influence, by example, by achievement, he has

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indicated the lines on which our freedom can be regained, and it is not too much to say that the prospects of our English art depend on the extent to which we accept his leadership. It is not here proposed to institute any comparison between Dr. Parry's work and that of other English musicians. The question how far other composers are upholding the same method is one which lies outside the limits of the present article. What is here maintained is that the ideal of Dr. Parry is the right one, and that its adoption is of paramount importance. If we accept his message we may once more become a great musical nation; if we reject it there is nothing before us but a second captivity." Now, if this be correct the matter begins to assume a very serious aspect, and the work of those composers whom we have been wont to consider as artists of the highest rank, will, I suppose, simply because they have not upheld the same methods as Dr. Parry, be put outside the pale of good English art, and ultimately be doomed to oblivion. But if, on the other hand, the statement be incorrect, why, then there is hope still. It is, of course, a question which no amount of argument will now decide. The future alone can prove the supremacy of

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methods as of all else; and for the present, in spite of these violent assertions, there does not seem to be any great cause for alarm so far as Dr. Parry is concerned. It would be in bad taste, to say the least of it—as well as unfair to the musician in question—for one to retaliate and say that "captivity" without adherence to Dr. Parry's methods (or Dr. anybody else's methods) would be preferable to achievement by means of them. Yet that is exactly what this over zealous young devotee might, in his impetuosity, have been the means of bringing about him. But it is because I am acquainted with Dr. Parry, as also am I with the writer of the article in question, that I know that the position in which the latter would place him is the last in the world that he would seek to occupy. Dr. Parry is a thorough musician. He has theories of his own—lots of them—and he upholds them strenuously, as every man has a right to do. But unless I am very much mistaken, he is the last man in the world to seek to thrust them forward at the expense of all others. Of itself, the fact that he holds strong views upon the subject of his art goes for little, for this is the age of strong views, and that not only amongst the initiated but

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amongst the ignorant. Apart from all these things he is a sufficiently striking figure of his time.

He was born on the 27th of February, 1848, at Bournemouth, where his parents were staying for a while. His home was then, as it is now, at Highnam Court, near Gloucester. It is one of the most famous of our old English country houses, and was purchased by Dr. Parry's father from an old West-of-England family named Guise. Situated between the Cotswold and the Malvern Hills, it stands on what was formerly the Forest of Dean, and during the siege of Gloucester it was the scene of some hard fighting. Dr. Parry's parents were both English. His mother was a daughter of Mr. H. F. Clinton the historian, and author of *Fasti Hellenici* and *Fasti Romani*. His father, Thomas Gambier Parry, was descended on his mother's side from the great naval family of Gambier. He was a man of highly cultivated artistic tastes, and of his art as a fresco painter he left some brilliant examples at Ely Cathedral and St. Andrew's Chapel in Gloucester. But he did not embrace art as a profession; he preferred merely to devote such time to it as remained to him after the performance of his various duties as a country squire. In their son

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Hubert are united the instincts of both parents. His artistic and musical faculty comes undoubtedly from his father who was also a cultured musician, whilst it is assuredly from his mother that he has inherited that strong tendency towards the historic and classic in art which is so marked a feature of his work as a composer.

The boy was only eleven years of age when he wrote his first hymn, and that his progress was proportionate to his precocity, may be gathered from the fact, that he was only fifteen when he graduated Mus. Bac. His early school days were passed at Malvern, whence he went to Winchester and thence to Eton. The beautiful "Willis" in Winchester Cathedral was then in the hands of Samuel Wesley, from whom he imbibed nothing but the soundest of doctrines. Then again at Eton he was no less fortunate, for there he came under Elvey's care. Up to this time music was uppermost in his thoughts, but at Eton it seems for a time to have given way to football. This was only natural, and it was in no way hurtful. At Oxford the same state of things continued—sport and music, sport and music, but sport always an easy first. At "Exeter," which was his college, he captained both cricket and foot-

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ball teams. Only in the long vacations did he give himself entirely up to musical study. Once he went to Stuttgart, and there with Hugo Pierson—who will be remembered as the composer of an opera "Contarini," and much church music—he did some hard study. Pierson, he says, did him an enormous amount of good. On leaving the University he desired nothing better than to be allowed to devote himself exclusively to his music. But his father would not hear of it. It ended in his father having his way, and in '71 he went into business in the city. For some years he tried hard to divide his attentions equally between Lloyd's and musical composition. The combination did not work well, and one of his occupations had to be relinquished. Needless to say, it was Lloyd's that eventually went to the wall. He had been doing some good work with Sterndale Bennett and Dannreuther, and some of the results of this, his "city" period, were the three odes of Anacreon and the trio in E minor. Besides these he had written numerous pianoforte pieces (amongst which was the duet for two pianos) and songs. In 1872 he married the daughter of Lord Herbert of Lea, but it was not until some seven years later that he relinquished his business altogether. His

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severance from it was gradual. His music began to attract the attention of a few, probably the few who, although they clamour for novelty, do not crave it irrespective of quality. He continued to study now with Sir George Macfarren and to bethink him of producing something on a larger scale than he had hitherto attempted. The thought took shape, and in '72 his overture to "Guillem de Castenbah" was played at the Crystal Palace concerts. Then he went abroad for some months, chiefly for the benefit of his wife's health. At Cannes he gave a series of concerts in conjunction with Guerini, the violinist, at which he performed many of his own works, gaining much experience thereby. Then on his return to London came the pianoforte concerto in F sharp, which Richter included in his programmes. At the same time he worked very hard at his contributions to Grove's Dictionary, which to my mind are by no means the least thing we have to thank him for. His article on 'form' is the only thing of its kind which is at once comprehensive and lucid, whilst his articles on other matters of musical theory reveal the profound scholar, and, more than that, the *practised* theoretician.

His first symphony was that in G produced

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at the Birmingham Festival of 1882. Then came the No. 2 in F, the music to the "Birds" of Aristophanes, and his setting of Shirley's 'Glories of our Blood and State.' But from amidst all his earlier works his "Prometheus' stands out clearly. When produced at the Gloucester Festival of 1880 it brought an avalanche of conflicting criticism about his ears. On one point alone was there any unanimity of opinion, and that was that in "Prometheus" was to be found a vivid reflection of Wagner's "Tristan,"—from which it differs about as much as it does from the "Messiah." True, there is Wagner in it, but it is not the Wagner of "Tristan." As regards the scoring the Bayreuth master has without doubt had his say, but speaking of the absolute music it would only have been to give the composer his due to have said that there was nothing exactly like it. It would seem to be nothing more nor less than the surcharged musical mind, giving off its humours first in one direction then in another, producing as a result a series of kaleidoscopic effects which are more valuable as an earnest of the sober residue bound to remain than of themselves. He got rid of a vast deal of superfluous *vim* in "Prometheus," but it would be incorrect to say

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that there was any definiteness of conception about the work as a whole. In it his musical standpoint is constantly shifting, and whatever it may or may not be, unity of method is not its strong point. There is some splendid musicianship in it, and some very abstruse thought, just as there is some very graphic and some very incoherent expression. But of beauty or geniality there is little, if aught, for which by all means let us blame his choice of subject. It lasted him for well nigh upon two years, for what he produced between it and the symphony in G is of small moment. But he did a deal of thinking in the interval: that is made plain enough on the face of the symphony itself. In the Scherzo alone is there to any extent a similarity of thought with the composer of "Prometheus." That Brahms has a fair hold of him is also apparent, though in the finale he tries hard to show that his toils are not such as he cannot get away from. But the dignified repose of the work is a very great relief after "Prometheus," though we must not forget that without "Prometheus" we might have had to wait longer for it.

The "Birds" music is lightsome enough, and his setting of Shirley's "Ode" is chiefly remark-

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able in that it was his first adoption of a form which has since served him perhaps better than any other. For this reason the writer of the article, to which I have alluded in the commencement, has arrived at the conclusion that the "Ode" is the English musical form of the future.

The second symphony in G, or the "Symphony on the Life of an Undergraduate," was originally produced by the Cambridge University Musical Society. But four years later—after the third in C had made its appearance—it was reproduced by Richter with its first and last movements entirely rewritten and the other two revised, and moreover, with the additional luxury of a "programme," which the owner of the initials "C. A. B." declares the composer to have revealed to him as an open secret. Thus he goes on:—"Having been invited by the Cambridge University Musical Society to compose a Symphony for Cambridge, what more natural than that he should seek to impart to it a 'local colouring'? For such a purpose, notwithstanding its rich historical associations, what could be more unpromising or less suggestive than Cambridge with its surrounding flats and fens and sluggish river? Dr. Parry, however,

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was equal to the occasion, and hit upon the happy expedient of recording the impressions, feelings and experiences of a young man during the period of his undergraduateship at Cambridge. It may be that (like Berlioz, who in his 'Harold' symphony has given us a picture of his feelings and adventures while resident in Italy) it is his *own* reminiscences of life at the sister University he has here put upon record. Be that as it may, the life of an undergraduate is the theme upon which he has worked; and it is one which is easily traceable throughout the symphony. In the introduction we are brought face to face with the novel sensations and high aspirations which an undergraduate feels on reflecting that from lately being a mere school*boy*, he has suddenly become a University *man*, and are further furnished with some premonitions of his character. The Allegro which immediately follows might be regarded as descriptive of the jollity of University life: health, high spirits, happiness in making new friends, with some prefigurement of that which *must* come—the dawn of love. In the Scherzo we realise all the jollification of a home scene: rustic merrymaking at a harvest festival during the long vacation with (in the Trio)

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not a little serious flirtation in a corner. The slow movement reveals to us our hero's first real passion and ardent love making; its anxieties as well as its happier phases. In the finale we are alive to his delight at having taken his degree, his grand resolves for the future, and determination to make his way in the world."

Of course, there is not the slightest reason why, if the composer has felt all these nice things about one undergraduate in particular or undergraduates in general, he should not use them to constitute his "programme" or emotional schedule. But to permit such a description to be printed, and to ask his audience to seriously endeavour to follow it, were surely unkind and unfair to himself and to them.

But if he must go so far, why not go further, and say, for instance, that with the appearance of the second subject of the *Allegro* we are in the football field, that Binks of "Brasenose," having made a splendid run through "quarters" and "halves" is just about to take his "drop" at goal, when he is splendidly collared by Parry of 'Exeter.' Or that in the *Scherzo* we have a magnificent hit to square-leg for four by Parry of

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'Exeter' when within forty-five seconds of time, and wanting three to win; and that in the rhythmical figure for violins and upperwood-wind Parry is represented by the upper wood-wind, and those that are joyfully carrying him to the pavilion by the violins. This would at least have had the merit of definite suggestion, and imagination might perhaps have done the rest. But in any circumstances it would seem strange that a harvest home should have been chosen as a typical phase of undergraduate life, for, granting that the moral standpoint is a grade lower, the atmosphere a shade less pure, the 'Empire' on Boat-race or Football night were surely equally typical, and certainly more suggestive of musical treatment. Then again why no reference to 'wines,' 'sporting of oaks,' and such-like vivid pictures of college life in rooms—those rooms so impregnated with association, that (Mr. Lowell assures us) they cannot be revisited in after life without there

> *"o'er us stealing*
> *The old familiar, warm, champagny, brandy-punchy feeling."*

But all these things are for the composer, so long (but so long only) as he keeps them to

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himself. But when he asks us to picture undergraduate life as we know it, and to follow his musical depiction of it, why then it is that we cannot but cry out at such an incongruous and ludicrous picture as we have here. To express in music a young Englishman's delight at having taken his degree and his determination to make his way in the world, is surely a task before which Hector Berlioz himself would have flinched. One would ever so much prefer to think that this was but another instance of the composer suffering at the hands of his (doubtless well-meaning) friends, than that he himself should put forward such a 'programme.' But although, as a picture of undergraduate life, the symphony conveys absolutely nothing, it is, viewed in the abstract, none the less interesting, for it contains some of the best music Dr. Parry has written. Had there simply been claimed for it appreciation as an example of English orchestral art, it would have been fairer to the work, kinder to the audience, and surely more satisfactory to the composer.

But there are five works upon which to my thinking Dr. Parry's fame may rest far more securely than upon any of his purely symphonic efforts. They are his settings of "Blest Pair of

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Sirens," "Judith," the "Ode to St. Cecilia's Day," "De Profundis," and "L'Allegro." In them are to be found all his virtues and all his shortcomings, and they can without the slightest injustice be selected to represent their composer's mature talent. They assuredly constitute him a 'master of English music.' It is easy to trace in them various influences at work. In "Judith," Dr. Stanford—on one of those occasions when, carrying the war into the enemy's camp, he has turned critic—has found "a legitimate influence (not plagiarism, *messieurs les censeurs*) of Boyce, as for instance in the *alla capella* passage, 'Jerusalem, that was queen of the nations, is brought low,' and of S. S. Wesley, in the soprano solo 'Though into the valley of the shadow of death.'" "Nor," he says, "is it only in the oratorio under consideration that Mr. Parry shows the results of Wesley's influence. In his choral setting of Milton's ode 'Blest pair of Sirens,' it is still more apparent, although the ability is greater and the workmanship finer than his predecessor could have manifested."

If Wesley was a musical identity capable of exerting an 'influence' in the broad sense of the word, doubtless Dr. Stanford is correct in

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attributing much of the 'English' element to be found in Dr. Parry's music to him, but I confess that his work never struck me as being anything but in common, in its salient features, with that of his contemporaries.

In most of his works Dr. Parry has been greatly influenced by Beethoven and by Brahms, perhaps by the latter most conspicuously. Then again, there are in "Judith" portions to which one can point with certainty as having been the result of his sympathy with Handel, and even with Mendelssohn. But it is only fair to say that when he thus draws upon his models, he commits no act of plagiarism proper. He usually does no more than allow their spirit and their principle to affect him. The laws of evolution must take their course, and he is but their humble servant. The time will surely come, if it has not come already, when these influences will be so merged in his own musical identity as to make it difficult indeed to say where they commence and where they end. It is so in every art.

One thing in his music is quite evident—he is determined to be original at any cost. Speaking of Brahms, at the conclusion of his "Studies of Great Composers," he says:—"The

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way he treats the inner parts of the harmony is as much his own as his melody at the top; . . . . he scarcely makes any pretence of writing tunes, or trusting the effect of his works to neat phrases. The principle of his art is to develop his works as complete organisms, and their artistic value depends upon the way in which they are carried out, and the total impression they make, rather than the attractiveness of the details." It is exactly in this respect that he himself reflects Brahms in the main, even if at times he goes so far as to emulate him in matters of detail. Then he goes on to say that in Brahms's works "the balance between subject and episode, or subject and continuation, is much more even than in the typical sonata of the Haydn and Mozart period. Instrumental works of that time seemed to be made upon simple tunes strung together by links which were often completely devoid of any kind of interest. The tendency of art has since been to make the passages between the subjects interesting also, and to lessen the sharpness of the outline which marked off the subjects from the rest of the work—in other words to make the whole more homogenous." This is well enough, and the tendency lies assuredly in the

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right direction; but it is nevertheless true that there are times when Brahms succeeds in lessening this sharpness of outline, as much by a lack of interest in the subject itself as by an an increase of interest in the intervening portions.

Dr. Parry's remarks upon his hero are only made the more interesting by the fact that his own music endorses them. The revival of the principles of the great old contrapuntal school, the working into instrumental forms of the musical qualities of the polyphonic method of Bach, the welding of the old with the new—these are its prominent characteristics. But he adds an English flavour which is of course entirely absent from the work of the ascetic Hamburg Master. Whether we owe it, as Dr. Stanford says, to Wesley or to others, matters little; there it is, and welcome it is. It is by his scholarship that he achieves most. Double counterpoint and fugue are to him but mere child's play. There is no trace of effort about those gigantic twelve part choruses of the "De Profundis." His mind is as much that of the mathematician as of the musician. It is impossible to get away from his tremendous learning, and it is no exaggeration to say that

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there are times when the process of analysis does more to reveal the value of his work than that of mere performance. And he is seldom if ever to be caught tripping. Admire his work as one will and must, admiration does not do it full justice. It is essentially music to be *esteemed*—that is the only word that expresses what I mean. One cannot help feeling that the correct thing to do with his scores is to have them bound in morocco and placed in one's library in some such position and in some such company as one would place Buckle's "History of Civilisation" or Hallam's "Middle Ages."

'In his tremendous sense of the dignity of his art and of his responsibility as an artist; in his determination to say nothing that shall not be of real worth and in his almighty horror of the commonplace in music, he is almost *bourgeois*. Some may say that here lies the very cause of his originality; and so it may be. But these same persons must admit that his originality is sometimes the reverse of beautiful. He may be the author of the greatest number of original cadences in our music, but that by no means constitutes him the maker of the greatest number of beautiful cadences. Then the horror he has of a 'full-close'—it seems to

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give him positive pain to approach one. On and on he goes, and really at times the tread of his self-possessed melody, stately as it is, becomes something very near to monotonous. One has only to know "Judith," to remark this. Yet he can be outwardly dramatic at times, and his skill as a musician is so great that he can achieve results which go very near to make us believe that he has true dramatic genius. But the means he uses for such achievement are ever the most complex. He is not like Gounod, who by the simplest of devices can obtain all that is needful for the musical expression of the most highly dramatic episodes. Perhaps what one misses most in Dr. Parry's art is himself. There is so little of the man, so much of the master. One of his predominating characteristics as a man is his geniality, and of geniality we have little or nothing in his music. He seems to be ever repressing himself. His learning has him in an iron grasp. If he could only break away from it for the nonce and be truly human and humanly fallible, what a tremendous zest it would give to his work! For in many respects it is noble music.

Doubtless it is for fear of sentimentality that he gives us so little of sentiment. In

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his "Lotos-Eaters" there is more of it than elsewhere, but even there he no sooner evolves phrases which are full of beauty than he repents the act and seeks to atone for his misdemeanour by surrounding them with a mass of polyphonic device which frequently goes to rob them of the very charm which constituted their beauty. 'Science at any cost,' would sometimes seem to be his motto. But science, great as it is and great as is his mastery of it, often fails him. As applied by him, it would appear to have the greatest contempt for all that does not come within its sphere. As a far-seeing writer on æsthetics has said, "Science seeks for truth, but when truth baffles and eludes it, science will turn towards falsehood; it will deny what it cannot prove, and call God himself a brain-phantom because he cannot be vivisected." And this indulgence it is, in some degree, that gives his music its highly prominent academic flavour, while for the rest his positions as Choragus to the University of Oxford and Professor of Composition at the Royal College of Music have not been without their effect. Undoubtedly mastery of form, directness of expression, and declamatory power, are his predominating features so far, and that he is

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aware of the direction in which his strength lies, is evident from his choice of subjects. The day will doubtless come when he will present us with an opera, and afford us further and greater opportunity of arriving at a correct estimate of his emotional power than we can possibly obtain from anything he has hitherto written. No matter what the result, the experiment can be nothing but highly interesting.

In his oratorio "Judith" he has without doubt touched high-water mark. Dr. Stanford termed it "an encouragement to his successors, a source of pride to his contemporaries, a tribute to his predecessors," and it certainly is all of these things, and it stands alone in the realm of Modern Oratorio. His orchestral sense is by no means his most highly developed sense, for while there is no lack of sonority in his scoring, there is not infrequently all too little of 'fancy.' What leanings he has in this art are certainly more towards Wagner than Berlioz, and sometimes the incongruity of Wagner in the orchestra and Brahms in the music is by no means compensated for by what there is of Parry in both. Of vocal nicety he has in common with many of our latter-day composers failed to fully realise the importance. Yet he is by no means so great an offender

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in this respect as are some of his colleagues. But had he to make choice between a contrapuntal or a vocal nicety there remains small doubt in my mind as to which he would choose.

We hear little of his chamber music now, yet much of it is really beautiful. His early Sonata for Piano and 'Cello in A, his Nonet for Wind Instruments in B flat, his Partita for Piano and Violin in D minor, and his Quintet for Strings in E flat, are surely one and all more worthy of performance at our Popular Concerts than is, for instance, Brahms's hideous Clarionet Trio. Assuredly there is more of beauty in them. And in art *rien n'est vrai que le beau.*

What Swinburne says of poetry is, I think, in a great degree true of music. "The test of the highest poetry is that it eludes all tests. Poetry in which there is no element at once perceptible and indefinable by any reader or hearer of poetic instinct may have every other good quality, but it is not poetry—above all, it is not lyric poetry—of the first water. There must be something in the mere progress and resonance of the words, some secret in the very motion and cadence of the lines inexplicable by the most sympathetic acuteness of criticism. Analysis may be able to explain how the colours of

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this flower of poetry are created and combined, but never of what process its odour is produced." And I take it that any music that does not possess something of this indefinable quality falls short of the very highest. We have it in "Faust," we have it in "Carmen," we have it in both "Lohengrin" and in "Tristan," ay, and we have it in "The Golden Legend." Let us hope we shall have it in the music of Hubert Parry. But there is a vast quantity of otherwise excellent art that is without it—so large a quantity that it is almost time we had a word in our language which should be capable of use towards the highest music in the same manner as is the word 'verse' to poetry. By its means we could get rid of an enormous quantity at a sweep, and it would suffer no injustice in the sweeping because it would not pass out of the sphere of *good* art, only out of the sphere of the highest and most perfect art; in a word the most beautiful. And beauty is the life of art. It may be strange, it may be terrible, it may be weird, it may be simple, but still true remain the words of Victor Hugo :—

"*La beauté est parfaite,*
La beauté peut toute chose,
La beauté est la seule chose au monde qui
N'existe pas à demi."

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CHARLES VILLIERS STANFORD.

If Dr. Villiers Stanford show a sympathy for one class of beings more than for another, it assuredly is for "those that go down to the sea in ships." He should without doubt be appointed musician to the Admiralty. The sea is to him truly a thing of life, and those of his works which are saturate in its brine have more of life in them than aught else he has done. In his partiality to it he has good company. Heine thought the "Flying Dutchman" the most attractive of all tales. He so loved the sea that it was to him as his own soul. "I often feel as if the sea must be my soul," he says. To Matthew Arnold the sea was "the voice of destiny and its message the message of despair." Victor Hugo exalted it as no man ever did or has since done, and Wordsworth sang its song in many measures. But its influence on this musician has nothing of mysticism in it. He makes

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of it no confidant. There is nothing in the "Revenge," or the "Battle of the Baltic," of that same spirit that influenced Wagner when he wrote his music to "The Flying Dutchman." It is not the sea in its serenity that attracts him. Rather does it appeal to him as the home of mariners and of ships, and as a scene of doing and daring by brave men. The smell of pitch and pine, the creaking shroud and well-filled sail, the dashing spray and the salt sea-wind—these are the things he loves to picture. But there is another and a stronger element in his sea music—the element of patriotism, of heroism, of British freedom. "What the note of British freedom means I never really understood until the other day, when I saw an English vessel sailing past when it was blowing great guns, and listened to the crew on deck, whose voices rose above the roar of wind and wave, as with almost impious defiance they shouted the ancient strain of 'Rule Britannia.'" Thus Heine has written, and it is some such feeling as he describes that has entered into the musician and caused the music of the "Revenge" to be as it is. "The lion," as Mr. Stevenson truly says, "is nothing to us; he has not been taken to the hearts of the people,

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and naturalised as an English emblem. We know right well that a lion would fall foul of us as grimly as he would of a Frenchman or a Moldavian Jew, and we do not carry him before us in the smoke of battle. But the sea is our approach and bulwark; it has been the scene of our greatest triumphs and danger; and we are accustomed in lyrical strains to claim it as our own." "War! loud war"—men stripped to the waist and bare to the feet, the sound of cannon and the clash of steel; brave hearts and Britain's pride—these are the things that appeal to Stanford and inspire him to his best. Rouse the patriot in him, and you rouse the musician. There is in his battle music distinctly traceable a sense of self-esteem generated from the knowledge of what our nation has achieved of naval glory in the past. It is a feeling common to all true Englishmen, and because he is an Irishman he would seem to have felt it none the less. The feeling is there and is deep-seated, and can be affected by no party spirit or question of Home Rule. In all other respects he is a striking example of a modern Irishman.

He was born in his country's capital on the thirtieth day of September 1852. That his

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marine sympathies are not immediately hereditary will be granted when it is said that his father, John Stanford, was examiner in the Court of Chancery in Ireland, and Clerk of the Crown for County Meath, and that his mother was the third daughter of William Henn, Master in Chancery. The father was an amateur vocalist of sufficient capacity to have sustained the part of "Elijah" on the occasion of the first performance of that oratorio in Ireland. He was also present at the initial performance at Birmingham, and there made the personal acquaintance of Mendelssohn. Lablache was his intimate friend, and many of the musicians who were to the fore at the time, such as Thalberg, Elsner, and Joachim, were to be met at his house in Herbert Street. The son, Charles Villiers Stanford, showed his love for music early enough, but he was of a sufficiently original turn of mind to substitute the violin for the piano as a means of gratifying his very youthful cravings. But he afterwards took to the piano, and received his first instruction from his mother. Then he was entrusted to Miss Meeke, who was one of Moscheles's pupils. His first compositions—consisting for the most part of chants and hymns—were done in his sixth

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year, and he gave a pianoforte recital before he had completed his tenth. A march, which he wrote at seven years, was performed at the Dublin Theatre Royal during the Christmas pantomime. (Oh, that ever a composition of Dr. Stanford's should have been performed in a pantomime—the mere thought of it is blasphemy!) At eleven he was sent to H. Tilney Bassett's school, where he had for fellows many whom now as men we are wont to call 'distinguished.' The reticence which is so marked a characteristic of him is evidently a latter-day development, for the concerts given in his Dublin days that did not include a composition from him were few in number. He studied the organ under Sir Robert Stewart, and frequently took the service at his parish church, St. Stephen's, the anthems chosen being oftentimes his own. He had quite a series of instructors in pianoforte playing, amongst whom were Mrs. Robinson, who was the wife of the conductor of the Dublin Musical Society; Miss Flynn, a pupil of Moscheles; and Michael Quarry, one of the same master's last pupils. This gentleman introduced him to the study of modern music in general, and to that of Wagner and Brahms in particular.

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Some would say he has much to answer for. But before anything of this had happened—before he had seen a note of "the master's" music—his mind would seem to have been working in the same groove, for he tells me that in his first boyish opera he adopted naturally the principle of leit-motives, and that it was with much astonishment that he found, on hearing "Lohengrin," that his favourite principle had been forestalled. (So that, if it had not been for Berlioz and Wagner, the glory of having invented what has developed into the musical craze of the century would have belonged to an Irishman!) But the first opera he ever heard was "Martha," with Patti, in 1860, and here again he received a shock, for she so disturbed the drama, he says, "as to sing as an encore, 'Comin' thro' the rye'!" It was reserved for Jenny Lind to be the first to really impress him. "She did so," he says, "indelibly." Taken as a whole, his early musical life would seem to have held more of pain than of joy for him. Whenever he heard the drums and trumpets used in the orchestra they made him cry, so that if he had been born twenty years later his young life would have been a torture to him. Charles Hallé, taking up the rôle of Job's comforter,

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assured him that he would hear a good deal more noise in the orchestra later on.

He now made his first visit to our shores, and studied composition for a while with O'Leary, and the pianoforte with Pauer. Chorley "took him up," and he made the acquaintance of Sullivan, Frederic Clay, and Grove at John Scott Russell's house at Sydenham. Shortly after his return to Ireland, where he gave several concerts, he went to college. At Cambridge he obtained a scholarship in classics, and an organist scholarship at Queen's College, and succeeded Dr. J. L. Hopkins as organist to "Trinity." His Opus 1 now appeared, and took the form of a set of songs from George Eliot's "Spanish Gipsy." Mr. Michael Quarry's guidance Wagnerwards is not evident to any great extent on the face of them—indeed his setting of "Sweet Springtime" is well nigh Mendelssohnian. He began to take a lively interest in the University Musical Society, and was in a short while appointed its conductor.

In the autumn of '73 he went abroad for the first time. At the Schumann Festival at Bonn he met Brahms and Ferdinand Hiller. In the latter he found a friend; in the former he met

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his "idol." His adulation for the art of Brahms is now so great as to almost constitute him a musical sectarian. He can listen to the Fourth Symphony in E minor—yea, even to the Clarionet Trio—and pronounce them beautiful.

Germany so fascinated him that he remained there on and off for some years, returning to England only for the spring and early summer. His time abroad he occupied variedly and well. A walking tour in Switzerland, a few weeks of the opera at Dresden, a month or two of study with Reinicke in Leipsic—these were all good things in their way, and calculated to broaden the views not only of the musician but of the man. At the same time he wrote a quantity of music. His Opus 2 took the form of a suite, his Opus 3 that of a Toccata, both for pianoforte. This latter was first played in Dresden by Miss Krebs in 1875.

Upon returning to his well-beloved Musical Society at Cambridge he lost no time in introducing them to the glories of Brahms's "German Requiem" and the third part of Schumann's "Faust." But even such pleasures as these failed to keep him for long, and in the next year he was to be found once more in Leipsic. This time he chose for master

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Friedrich Kiel, with whom he studied for some months. He was present at the first performance of Goetz's "The Taming of the Shrew," and formed the strongest of friendships with Ernst Frank, without whom Goetz's masterpiece would assuredly not have seen the light when it did. In a short memoir which he wrote of his friend on his death in 1889, Dr. Stanford tells us how the meeting between these two came about. "A knock," he says, "came at his (Frank's) door on the top story of a very lofty town house, and a gaunt figure entered his room, breathing painfully and with consumption writ plain upon his face. As soon as the stranger could speak he began, 'My name is Goetz, of Zurich.' Frank greeted him, and for some minutes vainly tried to discover the object of his visit. At last Goetz mustered up courage enough to stutter out: 'To tell you the truth, I have written an opera.' 'So much the better,' said my friend cheerily. 'Ah!' said Goetz, 'you are the first conductor who said that much to me; all the others say, 'So much the worse.' The sentence showed a true appreciation of Frank's nature, and the words of encouragement were not misplaced. The opera was, 'The Taming of the Shrew.' From that moment the two were

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fast friends, working together through the score, improving, shortening ('You are taking out my life-blood,' Goetz used to say when some inevitable cut was decided on), and preparing the work for the stage. The first performance was anxious work for the warm-hearted conductor. The invalid composer lay on a sofa in the stage-box, so weak and ill that a failure, as Frank knew too well, would have killed him then and there. He often spoke to me afterwards of the weight of this double anxiety, his hopes and fears at once for the success of the opera and for the life of its composer. The brilliant result is now a matter of history, and in its recording it is but fit that the generous man whom we have lost should have his first share."

Not till 1877 did Stanford return permanently to Cambridge. Yet in these early *Wanderjahre* he had managed to get through a vast deal of composition. A prelude and fugue for organ, two concert overtures, a violin concerto, a quantity of pianoforte music, a string quartett, and the incidental music to Tennyson's "Queen Mary"—which he composed at the Laureate's expressed desire—were conspicuous examples of his work at this period.

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Shortly after his return he married, and from this time on he has poured forth work after work with a regularity almost alarming. His first symphony in B Flat was originally written for the Alexandra Palace competition, but only succeeded in obtaining second prize, the more successful competitor being Mr. F. Davenport. Then came his opera, "The Veiled Prophet," written to a libretto by his Cambridge friend, Mr. W. Barclay Squire, and produced in the first instance with a German version by Ernst Frank at the Hanover Court Theatre. His next important works were the Elegiac Symphony, which was given at Cambridge in 1882, and his Orchestral Serenade in G, which I am inclined to think shows more of inventive and symphonic power than any of his orchestral works—its Intermezzo is clever almost to obtrusiveness. To the same period belong his really magnificent settings of Browning's Cavalier Songs. Here again we have him in 'heroic' vein, and the result is entirely successful. The lines—

"Kentish Sir Byng stood for his king
Bidding the crop-headed Parliament swing,"

and "Boot, saddle, to horse, and away," are such as he can set with a fair claim to suprem-

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acy. Small in dimensions as they are, these Cavalier Songs display more of real power than many of his larger works. But it is during the last ten years that Dr. Stanford's claims to be considered a master of English music have been most strongly put forward. In that time he has composed his two operas "Savonarola" and "The Canterbury Pilgrims," his setting of Walt Whitman's Elegiac Ode, two oratorios ("The Three Holy Children" and "Eden"), his settings of "The Revenge," "The Voyage of Maeldune," and "The Battle of the Baltic," two symphonies (the "Irish" in F minor, and the fourth in F major), the music for Æschylus' "Eumenides," Sophocles' "Œdipus Rex," and Tennyson's "Carmen Seculare," besides a large quantity of chamber music, and one more contribution to naval music in the form of an overture to celebrate the tercentenary of the defeat of the Spanish Armada. To this add that in the same time he has founded the Cambridge Symphony Concerts, produced numerous new works at the C.U.M.S., been made a member of the Société des Compositeurs de Musique of Paris, and Vice-President of the London College of Organists, that from the University of Cambridge he has received the appointment of Pro-

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fessor of Music to the University and the honorary degree of Mus. Doc., and from the Royal College of Music that of Professor of Composition and Orchestral Playing at that institution, and it will be granted that he has not laboured in vain.

In which capacity—composer or professor—his work has been most valuable, it were difficult to decide. As a composer he has essayed well nigh every form from symphony to song, from oratorio to opera. In the last-named form he has written three important works, and the same want is felt in each of them. The faculty of dealing with the more tender feelings of mankind is not his. His emotional capacity is his smallest capacity, and of real love-music he has never written eight consecutive bars. Thus his efforts in the sphere of opera are handicapped. In his "Veiled Prophet" there is an abundance of 'local colour,' yet it is one-sided. There is all the *bizarrerie* but none of the sensuousness of the East. This latter has been successfully achieved by few. David, Bizet, and perhaps St. Saëns, have given it to us, and it would therefore seem to be exclusively a French possession. But however desirable or undesirable a quality it may be of itself, we cannot but

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miss it in "The Veiled Prophet." There are times when Dr. Stanford's operatic music affects us much in the same way as does an oratorio of Massenet. He is every whit as prone to drop into oratorio when he is writing grand opera as is the French master to give us opera (and sometimes very bad opera) when he is essaying oratorio. And of the two it were hard to say which is the more irritating. Nevertheless, "The Veiled Prophet" has its strong qualities. Its overture is quite one of the best things of its composer, and there is an element of artistic restraint about it, especially in the music of Mokanna, which is very welcome. Moreover, there is here, as in all of Dr. Stanford's music, much that appeals to the student. The contemplation of his scholarship is always pleasant.

"The Canterbury Pilgrims," which be it said has little or nothing to do with the Tales of Chaucer, is just such a "book" as would have suited the late Alfred Cellier. He would probably have made of it a charming light English opera. But Dr. Stanford has chosen to use it for the exemplification of those advanced theories which we know him to hold, and he has given us music which would incline us to think that "Die Meistersinger" had been his

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model. The effect of the combination is not happy, for the notes struck are not infrequently those of inconsistency and artificiality. And the pity of it is that it is all done with the very best intent. He is but putting his theories into practice. Yet perhaps it is not his theory, so much as his sense of the fitness of things, that is to blame. The fact that what is admirable in one place may be equally deplorable in another, would not seem to have been fully borne in upon him. His theories are not such as can be applied to all and sundry—they of necessity limit his range of subject, and "The Canterbury Pilgrims," as it stands, comes not within that range. Again, like many of his fellows, the road to originality is that over which he would always travel for choice, and to the looker-on nothing is more patent than that the quest thus pursued (as a quest) invariably defeats its own ends. The "real article" is not to be found thus. That which *is* found is at best a negative quality, for if it can be called originality at all, it is the originality of avoidance rather than of accomplishment. There is in vogue to-day a species of musical Pharisaism, with "Thank God, I am not musically as other men," for its motto. And there are some musicians who will pursue the thing so

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far that it is only needful for them to feel the inclination to carry on a phrase in "tonal" sequence to determine forthwith to crush the desire and proceed in "real" sequence. The illustration is a chance one, but it serves, though I am well aware that there are those who abhor a sequence of any kind, and avoid it as they would a plague or a "full-close." But Dr. Stanford is no musical fanatic. He has as great a sense of what is artistically nice as any of his fellows, and it is probably due as much to his nationality and temperament as to anything that he sometimes allows his curiosity to run away with his desire for beauty. He loves to play at "see-saw" on an enharmonic diesis; but then so does Brahms, and doubtless that is to him sufficient justification. If Brahms's String Sextet in G and his Romances from Tieck's "Magelone" be examples of what is nicest in manner of modulation, why, then, much of the music in "The Canterbury Pilgrims" is on this score beyond reproach.

I have said that there are times when he allows his curiosity to overbalance his desire for beauty. If we want proof of his "romantic" tendencies, herein we find it, for this "curiosity" is a distinguishing feature of the romantic

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school. But, on the other hand, if we seek the classic in his art, we find it also, for no musician values mere academic propriety more highly than he does. And his constructive intellect is one of his strongest points. No matter in which direction he may incline, it is his art alone that gains him what is his of achievement. But the "ars celare artem" is not his. The devices of the musician, ingenious as they frequently are, are always visible on the face of his works.

Of his symphonies, that which has gained for him most of fame is "The Irish." Here, for the obtainment of local colour, he has called to his aid all kinds of melodies and "modes." The "Æolian mode transposed," which consists of the scale having its semitonic intervals between the second and third and fifth and sixth degrees, and the "Mixolydian," with its semitones between the third and fourth and sixth and seventh degrees, are both extensively used; while of purely national melody he has chosen such airs as the "Lament of the Sons of Usnach," "Remember the glories of Brian the Brave," and "Let Erin remember the days of old." Such means as these may be termed legitimate, and it must be granted that in his handling

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of them he has displayed scholarship and ingenuity in a very high degree. But it is upon matters such as the "recapitulation" and "development" of this material that the work mostly depends for its success, and although it is difficult to conceive a fuller realisation of his avowed purpose than the composer obtains, for my own part I must confess that I find his fourth symphony of infinitely greater interest, if only because it lays claim to nought but consideration as pure abstract music.

In oratorio he is perhaps more dull than elsewhere. In his "Three Holy Children," which is certainly more interesting than his "Eden," he is weakest in the very place where he should be strongest. He is more happy by the waters of Babylon than on the plain of Dura; but nowhere has he given us more excellent examples of his scholarship and power of intellectuality than in the first part of this work. His setting of the Forty-sixth Psalm is highly decorous, and if the "Eumenides" music lack the classic relish of his *confrère* Hubert Parry, it shows a greater rhythmical facility than he has ever before shown himself to possess.

His chamber music I would place next in order of merit to his sea-music. The Quintet in

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D Minor and the Trio in E Flat are both most excellent specimens of their kind. Then there is his Violoncello Sonata written during a stay with Piatti at his villa at Cadenabbia. On the spirit of it the lovely atmosphere of Como has not been without its effect, while as pure violoncello music it takes the highest rank.

On the whole, the features that seem to me to predominate in his music are an extreme robustiousness, a fine intelligence, and a marked tendency towards the romantic, which is sometimes in danger of coming within the confines of the grotesque. On the other hand, he would seem to lack delicacy, the lighter forms of fancy, and, above all, emotional capacity. His orchestration has no very pronouncedly individual features—it is unnecessary to remark upon Wagnerian influences—but it is generally in keeping with the spirit of his work. The greatest musical offence with which he can be charged lies in the fact that he has written more dull music than any of his fellows. But in this he would seem to have reached the climax in his "Eden," and it is not improbable that in the future there may be less of cloud and more of sunshine in his work.

As a professor he has achieved a great

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amount of good (even if he has done as much as any one to make Brahms a prophet in this country), and it is impossible to be too loud in praise of his efforts on behalf of music in England generally and Cambridge in particular. Moreover, in his endeavours to bring us in contact with the best Continental masters, to inspire them with an interest in us, and us with an interest in them, he has done much towards ameliorating the status of the English as a modern musical nation. There could be no better way of overcoming those extreme prejudices which exist against us on the Continent than by inviting the masters of music of all countries to come and see and hear for themselves. Thus we may hope to convince them that as a nation we have some musical worth; that even if a highly sensitive musical organisation be not a characteristic feature of the modern Englishman, from his country has come some of the best music, and some of the best performances of music, of these latter days. When St. Saëns visited the Birmingham Festival in '79, the impression made upon him was such that it caused him to write in this wise :—"Je voudrais que les personnes que refusent tout sentiment musical aux Anglais pussent entendre

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les choristes de Birmingham. Justesse, précision de la mesure et du rythme, finesse des nuances, charme de la sonorité, ce chœur merveilleux réunit tout. Si les gens qui chantent ainsi ne sont pas musiciens, ils font exactement ce qu'ils pourraient faire, s'ils étaient les meilleurs musiciens du mondé. Notez qu'on peut, au dernier moment, leur demander d'autres nuances on d'autres mouvements que ceux dont ils ont contracté l'habitude. Ils exécutent immédiatement et parfaitement ce qu'on leur demande. Ils se jouent des intonations difficiles, des pianissimos scabreux sur les notes élevées. Que de pareils chanteurs soient mal organisés pour la musique, c'est ce qu'il m'est impossible d'admettre ; et l'admît-on, il faudrait leur accorder par cela même un plus grand mérite qu'à d'autres qui, mieux organisés, n'arrivent pourtant pas au même résultat. Sachons donc reconnaître franchement les qualités des autres : le contraire ne fera jamais de tort qu'à nous-mêmes."

And there is no doubt in my mind that it is only necessary for other Continental masters to attend some of our performances, both of their and our own music, to wring from them the same confession. It does not follow that they

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will make public their impressions, as M. Saint Saëns has done, but they will at least have acquired a definite idea of our musical capabilities, and thus gradually will prejudice be killed. Through the efforts of Dr. Stanford, a number of famous musicians will shortly be gathered together in this country, and although it may grieve him sorely that all efforts to secure the attendance of the great Johannes have, for the present at all events, been unavailing, he will be entitled to claim the thanks of his fellow-musicians for having used the power which, by virtue of his position, is his to such good purpose. But let him not be cast down. The day may come when even Brahms will awake to the fact that Germany is no longer the hub of the musical universe, and himself its "bearings"; and although it is now a matter of some difficulty to induce him to so much as address an envelope to this country, the time may yet come when he shall be seen fast asleep in his stall at St. James's Hall (and that through no fault of performance, mind you) whilst his Fourth Symphony is being conducted by Dr. Villiers Stanford.

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